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April, May, June, 1923

From the painting by C. Arnold Slade

JOSEPH THE DREAMER

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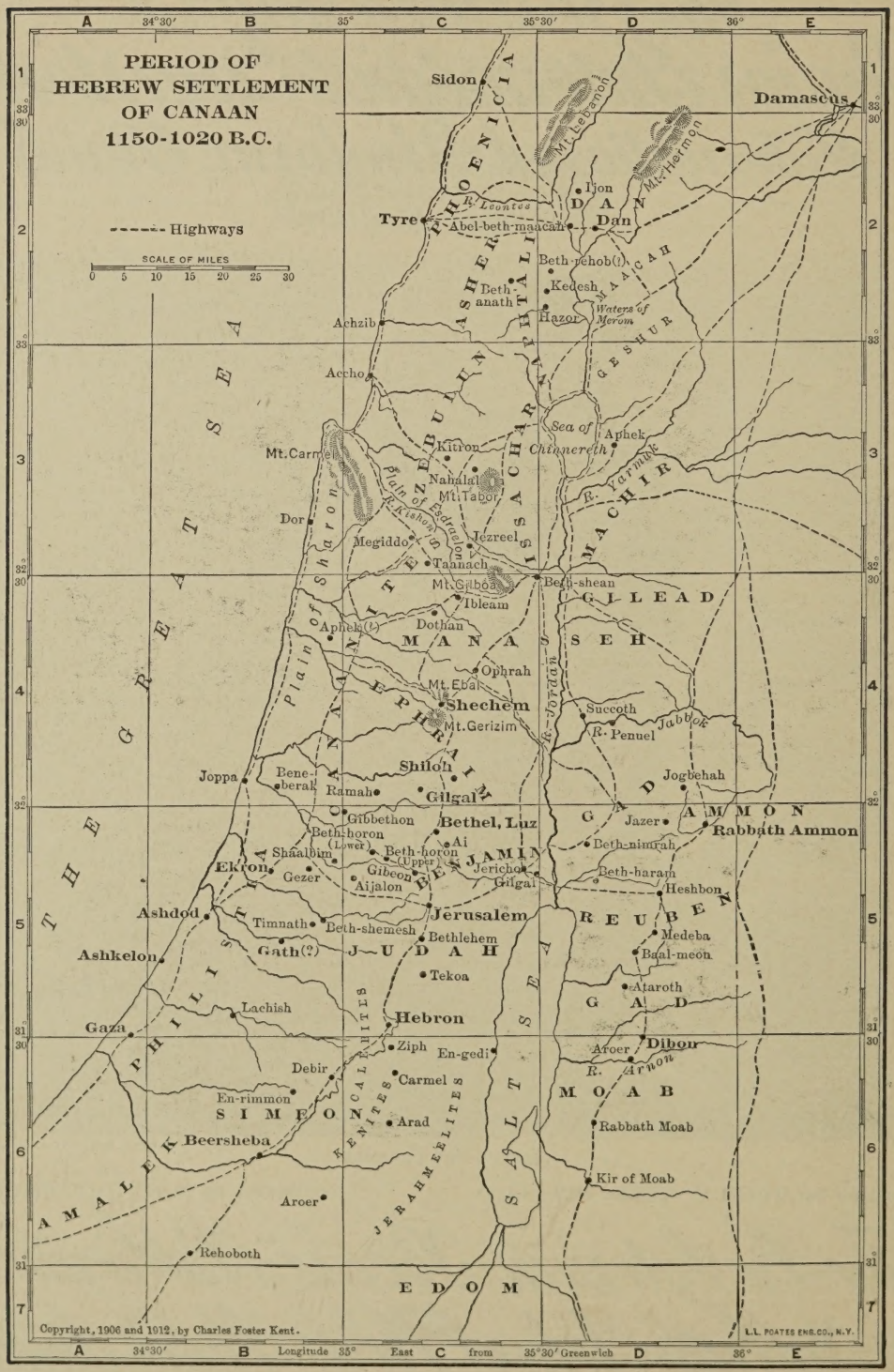
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R. Leontes
Tyre
Abel-beth-maacah
Beth-rehob(?)
Kedesh
Beth-anath
Hazor
Waters of Merom
MAACAH
GESHUR
ASHER
NAPHTALI
Achzib
Accho
THE GREAT SEA
Sea of Chinnereth
Aphek
Kinnrot
Nahalal
Mt. Tabor
Mt. Carmel
Plain of Sharon
Plain of Esdraelon
R. Kishon
R. Yarmuk
Dor
Megiddo
Jezreel
Taanach
ISSACHAR
MACHIR
Mt. Gilboa
Beth-shean
Ibleam
GILEAD
Dothan
Aphek(?)
MANASSEH
Ophrah
Mt. Ebal
Shechem
Mt. Gerizim
EPHRAIM
R. Jordan
Succoth
R. Penuel
Jabbok
Joppa
Bene-berak
Ramah
Shiloh
Gilgal
Jogbehah
Gibbethon
Bethel, Luz
Jazer
GADDI
AMMON
Rabbath Ammon
Beth-horon (Lower)
Ai
Beth-nimrah
Shaalbim
Beth-horon (Upper)
BENJAMIN
Ekron
Gezer
Gibeon
Jericho
Beth-haram
Aijalon
Gilgal
Heshbon
Ashdod
Timnath
Beth-shemesh
Jerusalem
REUBEN
Medeba
Ashkelon
Gath(?)
Bethlehem
JUDAH
Baal-meon
Tekoa
Ataroth
GAD
Lachish
Hebron
Gaza
Ziph
En-gedi
Aroer
Dibon
R. Arnon
Debir
Carmel
MOAB
En-rimmon
SIMEON
Arad
Rabbath Moab
Beersheba
KENITES
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JERAHMEELITES
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FOREWORD

The lessons for the quarter consist of studies of some of the great characters of the Old Testament: Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Ruth, Samuel, David, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Nehemiah, and Esther. A recent writer has pointed out that once in every five hundred years God turns a new page in history. We go back to Abraham to the year 2000 B.C., and we see God's hand turning a page. Five hundred years go by and we see a new page turned, and we read the story of Moses. Five hundred years go by and another page is turned, and we read the life and deeds of David. Another five hundred years pass, and we are introduced to Nehemiah and Esther. After five hundred years we come to Jesus.

It is a suggestive idea, and in these lessons we behold the invisible hand of God turning the pages preparatory to the coming of Christ. We learn to live by living, and these great men and women help to show us the way.

Do not miss the meaning of this quarter's lesson.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

Yours very sincerely,

Hugh T. Kerr

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THE WALK TO EMMAUS

(Easter Lesson)

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen." —Luke 24: 5, 6.

TEXT OF LESSON, Luke 24: 13-31

For entire lesson, see Luke, ch. 24

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

13 And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was threescore furlongs from Jerusalem.

14 And they communed with each other of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, while they communed and questioned together, that Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What communications are these that ye have one with another, as ye walk? And they stood still, looking sad.

18 And one of them, named Cleopas, answering said unto him, Dost thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem and not know the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.

21 But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel. Yea and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things came to pass.

22 Moreover certain women of our company amazed us, having been early at the tomb;

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them that were with us went to the tomb, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 And he said unto them, O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!

26 Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they were going: and he made as though he would go further.

29 And they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in to abide with them.

30 And it came to pass, when he had sat down

AUTHORIZED VERSION

13 ¶ And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Em'ma-us, which was from Je-ru'sa-lem *about* threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Je'sus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cle'opas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Je-ru'sa-lem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Je'sus of Naz'areth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Is'ra-el: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Mo'ses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with

with them to meat, he took the bread and blessed; and breaking *it* he gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

The Time—April, A.D. 30. **The Place**—The Road to Emmaus.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, March 26	The Walk to Emmaus	Luke 24 : 13-24.
Tuesday, March 27	Jesus Makes Himself Known	Luke 24 : 25-32.
Wednesday, March 28	The Risen Lord	Matt. 28 : 1-10.
Thursday, March 29	Jesus Appears to His Disciples	John 20 : 19-29.
Friday, March 30	The Ascension of Jesus	Acts 1 : 1-8.
Saturday, March 31	Christ's Resurrection Our Hope	I Cor. 15 : 12-20.
Sunday, April 1	The Humiliation of Christ	Isa. 53 : 7-12.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

13. Two of them. The name of one, Cleopas, is given. The name of the other is unknown. Both of them, however, were Jews. **Threescore furlongs.** About eight miles. The location is not definitely known.

17. What communications. Revised Version margin, "What words are these that you exchange one with another?" Perhaps he walked with them before speaking to them.

18. Dost thou alone sojourn. The Revised Version margin says, "Dost thou sojourn alone in Jerusalem?" The suggestion is that everyone knew what had happened.

19. A prophet. See v. 21. They were not convinced that Jesus was the Christ.

30. Blessed. The Jews had a rule to this effect: three who eat together are bound to give thanks. It was Jesus' habit to bless bread before eating.

BETWEEN THE LESSONS

This is the first lesson of a new quarter. The general title of this series is "Great Men and Women of the Bible." The lessons of this quarter deal with great characters of the Old Testament, and are to be followed in the lessons of the next quarter by a study of the great men and women of the New Testament. These lessons during the six months will be of exceptional interest, and will allow us to become acquainted with the men and women who stand out in the Bible as leaders. This first lesson, in one sense, does not belong to the series. It is the Easter lesson, and is rightly related as a concluding lesson in the study of the Gospel of Luke, which was the subject of study during the last quarter. The last lesson of the quarter, preceding the review, was about the crucifixion. It contained the story of the suffering and death of Jesus, and should be followed by the story of the resurrection. This lesson contains the resurrection story, and we study it in the words of the Gospel of Luke from which the lessons of the first quarter were taken. The story of the Easter morning as told in the first verses of this chapter should be read. On the first day of the week, at early dawn, the women came to the tomb with spices to prepare the body of Jesus for permanent burial. They found the stone rolled away and the tomb empty, and while they stood perplexed they saw two angels who told them that Jesus had risen. The women returned to the apostles and told what they had seen and heard, and Luke tells us that "Peter arose, and ran unto the tomb; and stooping and looking in, he seeth the linen cloths by themselves; and he departed to his home, wondering at that which was come to pass." It was the first Easter Sunday, and our lesson contains the story of what happened on the afternoon of that first Easter Day.

THE TWO DISCIPLES

Luke 24: 13, 14

Sunday afternoon two of the disciples left Jerusalem to go to Emmaus, about eight miles from Jerusalem. The name of one of these disciples was Cleopas; the name of the other is not given, and it is useless to try to discover who he was. They were both Jews, for they speak in v. 20 of "our rulers." They did not belong to the apostles, for later they hastened to tell the Eleven what they had seen and heard. They knew, however, where the apostles lived, and their meeting place in the upper room, and they had hoped that Jesus was indeed the Christ. The passover feast had come to an end and with the death of Christ upon the cross their hopes had perished. They were returning to their homes, dejected and downcast because of what had happened on Calvary. Doubtless they were close friends for we are told that "they communed with each other of all these things which had happened." They talked everything over, and they were unable to come to any conclusion in their own minds. They only knew that Jesus had died upon the cross; and they were unable to rise above the despair and hopelessness of that fact. It is a good thing however, when people are willing to talk with one another concerning the things of God. We are always ready to talk and to converse about other things, and we are often reluctant and unwilling to speak to one another about the things of our

Christian faith. These two disciples on that Sabbath afternoon, walking homeward, talked over with one another the deepest things of their hearts.

THE GREAT COMPANION

Luke 24: 15-17

We know what they were talking about. They were talking about what had happened in Jerusalem to Jesus during the feast of the passover. While they were engaged in earnest conversation Jesus drew near and walked with them. Perhaps he came from behind and they did not see him until he took his place at their side. "Jesus draws near to commune with those who commune with him." He answered the desires of their hearts, and in their need appeared to them.

We are told in this wonderful and mysterious story that "their eyes were holden that they should not know him." They were prevented from recognizing him. Perhaps there was something about Jesus that made it difficult for them to recognize him. In Mark 16: 12 we read that he appeared in "another form." This at least is true, that some veil hung between their eyes and their Master so that they were unable to recognize him and know him immediately. Probably he wished to have time to teach them and instruct them concerning the Scriptures and explain to them the necessity of his suffering and death. Had he immediately revealed himself to them fear and joy would have made it impossible for him to teach them what it was necessary for them to know in order to possess an intelligent faith. He came to them in a perfectly natural way and as he walked with them along the road he inquired quietly and naturally why they were engaged in such earnest conversation and what the subject of their conversation was.

THE WALK TO EMMAUS

THE STORY OF THE CROSS

Luke 24: 18-24

The answer of Cleopas indicated surprise and astonishment. Cleopas said, "Dost thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem and not know the things which are come to pass there in these days?" Cleopas meant to say that everyone in Jerusalem knew what had taken place, and he meant to suggest that surely he must be a stranger indeed who did not know what had happened in the holy city. If he did not know, then surely he must be the only one who was ignorant of the great events which had taken place, for all Jerusalem had been moved by the death of Jesus. The unknown Stranger did not reply to the expressed surprise of Cleopas, merely saying, "What things?" And then Cleopas revealed to him all that was in his heart. It is a wonderful story he tells us, and it is interesting because it shows us what the disciples thought about Jesus before they became convinced that he had risen from the dead, and was indeed and in truth the Son of God. He calls Jesus "Jesus the Nazarene." To him he was "a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." That was as far as Cleopas could go. He had not yet come to the conclusion that Jesus was the Messiah. However, the hope that had been in his heart had been destroyed by what had happened. The chief priests and "our rulers" had "delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him." Up to the time of the cross it had been the hope of those who knew Jesus best that it was he who should redeem Israel. They hoped that in Jesus they would discover their Messiah, and their political Redeemer, but the cross had destroyed their hope, and left them desolate. There were still, however, things to be explained which they were not able to interpret. Jesus during his life had said something about rising from the dead on the third day, and Cleopas said that the third day had come, and certain amazing things had taken place. Certain women had been early at the tomb and had seen a vision of angels and were told that Jesus was alive, after certain of the disciples had gone to the tomb and had found it empty. Between hope and fear the minds of these two travelers were ill at ease and disturbed. Their story is interesting because it shows us the state of mind in which the disciples were before the truth of the resurrection came home to them.

THE GOSPEL STORY

Luke 24: 25-27

The Stranger had listened in silence to this wonderful story. Now he said, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!" The one thing that had destroyed the hope of these two disciples was the death of Jesus on the cross. To them the cross was a stumblingblock to faith. They could not bring themselves to believe that the Christ of God could be put to death in such a shameful way. The Christ surely must be One who would be beyond the power of wickedness to slay. This, however, is just the opposite of the truth. It was by means of the cross, according to the Scriptures, that he would come into his power, and unto his glory. Therefore Jesus undertook to explain that the suffering and the pain of the death on the cross were not contrary to a true faith in him as the Son of God and the Son of Man. He stated boldly the fact that suffering is a path to glory. He said, "Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?" In order to make his message clear he took the Old Testament Scriptures with which they were familiar, and beginning with Moses he interpreted in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

These men were ignorant, they needed to be taught, and before Jesus revealed himself he explained and interpreted the Scriptures. True religion rests upon knowledge, and true faith is built upon intellectual comprehension of truth. We interpret Scripture rightly when it leads us to a better understanding of Jesus as the Christ. John Wesley said: "The inspired writers give him all the titles of the Most High God. They call him over and over by the uncommunicable name Jehovah, never given to any creature. So that we need not scruple to pronounce him God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; in glory equal with the Father, in majesty coeternal."

THE RISEN CHRIST

Luke 24: 28-31

The conversation between Jesus and the two travelers continued until the village of Emmaus was reached. When they came to the door of the home Jesus showed no signs of remaining with them, but "made as though he would go further." They were unwilling, however, to part with him, and spoke to him words that have become familiar to us and speak to us of the deepest experiences of our spiritual life. "They constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent." In that humble home they sat down to eat their evening meal. They were tired with the journey, and were weary, and there alone with their Lord, still unknown to them, they saw him take the bread, and bless it, and when he had broken it he gave to them, and immediately "their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight." Something happened in that moment of time, and they knew that they had been in the presence of Jesus. Perhaps they saw his pierced hand or heard something familiar in his voice or noted something familiar in his way of handling the bread; or, perhaps, the veil which had been thrown across their vision was removed and for a moment they saw that they were in the presence of the risen Christ. And, then, suddenly they were alone. This time their thoughts and conversation were different. Looking at one another they said, "Was not our heart burning within us, while he spake to us in the way, while he opened to us the scriptures?" Without waiting to finish the meal "they rose up that very hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them."

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Give the time and the place of the events of this lesson.
2. What were the two disciples talking about on their way homeward?
3. Why were they sad?
4. How did Jesus turn their sadness into joy?
5. How does Jesus still reveal himself to us in the Bible and in the breaking of the bread?
6. Repeat the verses of the hymn, "Abide with Me."

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 18. How do we receive Jesus Christ as our Saviour?

A. We receive Jesus Christ as our Saviour by repentance and faith.

Q. 19. What is it to repent?

A. To repent is to be truly sorry for sin and to turn from it unto God for forgiveness, with sincere purpose to do God's will.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Who were the two disciples who journeyed to Emmaus?
2. Why did they not recognize Jesus?
3. What disappointment did they express?
4. Upon whom did these disciples lay the blame for the death of Jesus?
5. How did Jesus show them that the cross was not a stumblingblock?
6. How did Jesus assure them that he had risen from the dead?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 15. What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?

A. The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

ABRAHAM, THE HERO OF FAITH

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness."—Rom. 4: 3.

TEXT OF LESSON, Gen. 12: 1-5; Heb. 11: 8-10, 17-19

For entire lesson, see Gen. 12: 1 to 25: 8; Heb. 11: 8-19

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

Gen. 12: 1 Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

4 So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

* * * * *

Heb. 11: 8 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a *land* not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

* * * * *

17 By faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac: yea, he that had gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten *son*;

18 *Even he* to whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called:

19 Accounting that God *is* able to raise up, even from the dead; from whence he did also in a figure receive him back.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

Gen 12: 1 Now the Lord had said unto A'bram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

4 So A'bram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and A'bram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Ha'ran.

5 And A'bram took Sa'rai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Ha'ran; and they went forth to go into the land of Ca'naan; and into the land of Ca'naan they came.

* * * * *

Heb. 11: 8 By faith A'bra-ham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with I'saac and Ja'cob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

* * * * *

17 By faith A'bra-ham, when he was tried, offered up I'saac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*,

18 Of whom it was said, That in I'saac shall thy seed be called:

19 Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

The Time—About 1996-1821 B. C.

The Places—Chaldea, Mesopotamia, Canaan.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, April 2	The Call of Abram	Gen. 12 : 1-5.
Tuesday, April 3	Abram and Lot	Gen. 13 : 5-12.
Wednesday, April 4	Abram Justified by Faith	Gen. 15 : 1-6.
Thursday, April 5	Abram—Abraham	Gen. 17 : 1-8.
Friday, April 6	The Trial of Abraham's Faith	Gen. 22 : 3-13.
Saturday, April 7	The Father of the Faithful	Rom. 4 : 13-18.
Sunday, April 8	Human Need and Divine Grace	Ps. 40 : 1-8.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

Gen. 12: 1. Abram. Later changed to "Abraham." Gen. 17: 5. For family history see Gen. 11: 27-32.

2. A blessing. Those friendly to him would prosper. See Ps. 21: 6, margin.

5. Land of Canaan. The journey would be across the Euphrates, passing Damascus, crossing the Jordan, and entering Canaan with Shechem as a destination.

Heb. 11: 9. Land of promise. Canaan, the land promised to Abraham.

10. City. The New Jerusalem, the home of the soul. Rev. 21: 2-27.

19. In a figure. Read Gen., ch. 22. Faith is the victory. Perhaps a parable of Christ's resurrection.

THE FRIEND OF GOD

One of the greatest characters in all history is Abraham. Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans look back to him as the founder of a great world religion, and as the outstanding example of faith. In the Bible he is given high honor. Isaiah 41: 8 reads, "But thou, Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend." This is a remarkable title to be given to any man. Abraham is called the "friend of God." It seems strange when we think of it that God should need a friend, and that this high honor should be given to a man who was at times imperfect in his conduct and unworthy in his life. We remember, however, that Jesus called his disciples "friends" and they were far from perfect. There were many things that were unlikable and unlovable in the life of Abraham. We hear of his being guilty of deception, unkindness, and even cruelty, but when we consider his life as a whole we come to the conclusion that he was always seeking the face of God, was always willing to confess his failures and to turn back to God in penitence, seeking his pardon. There is a definition of a friend which says "A friend is one who knows all about you and likes you just the same." Certainly God knew all about Abraham and yet he called him his "friend." The story of his life is told in the book of Genesis, beginning with the twelfth chapter, and going on through the twenty-fifth chapter. The Jews always spoke of Abraham as their father.

THE CALL OF ABRAHAM

Gen. 12: 1

Our lesson begins with the story of Abraham's call. Abraham lived in the land of Ur of the Chaldees. It was in the land which we to-day call "Mesopotamia." His father's name was Terah, and his nephew was Lot. When we meet with Abraham he was married and his wife's name was Sarai. The family had moved from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran, which was a distance of about six hundred miles. Haran at that time was under Babylonian rule. We are not told in Genesis why the family of Abraham left Ur for Haran, but we know that God was guiding them. The people who lived in Ur were idolaters as were also the people who lived in Haran, and doubtless Abraham was moving out of a country which gave him little opportunity of developing his family life, according to the will of God and the wish of his own heart. In Haran he lived for some years, and then the definite call of God came to him to remove from that place and journey into the land which had been promised him.

We are not told how the call came to Abraham. We are not even told how Abraham first came to know God. One thing, however, is certain, and that is that Abraham knew God and that God revealed to Abraham the purpose of his will. The call may have come to Abraham through some vision in the night, or by some angelic messenger, or through the thoughts of his own heart, guided by the Spirit of God.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD

Gen. 12: 2, 3

When God calls a man to leave his home and his father's house, and to go out into a strange world he does so because he has something better to offer, and his promise to Abraham was one of the most wonderful promises ever given to a man. He said, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Doubtless Abraham had much to leave behind him, but God placed before him a wonderful reward. The Land of Promise was far better than the land he knew, and yet the people who saw Abraham leave his country probably said that he was foolish and was going on a fool's errand. God called Abraham from a country that was full of idolatry to go into a new world where he might establish an altar for the worship of the true God.

THE FIRST PILGRIM FATHER

Gen. 12: 4, 5

If you take a map of the Old World it will be interesting to trace Abraham's journey from Haran to the land of Canaan. He may have crossed over the Euphrates River by the great ford at Carchemish, sixty miles west of Haran, and then turned south past Hamath and Damascus. Then perhaps he went down the Jordan valley on the east side until he reached the ford twenty-five miles north of the Dead Sea which Jacob afterwards crossed. Turning northwest from there he would reach Shechem in the center of Canaan. We are told that there went with him his wife and his nephew Lot, and "all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran." This would make up quite a company, and it would be

an impressive caravan that would wind its way across the desert and through the land.

The Land of Promise, Canaan, was afterwards known as Palestine, or the Holy Land. It was peculiarly fitted for the purpose appointed of God. It was a narrow strip of land lying between the desert and the Mediterranean Sea. It was separated from all the other nations by mountains on the north and by a desert on the south. It lay between Babylon and Egypt, and was wonderfully situated for the development of a distinct nation. It became a school in which God trained his people for centuries, and there prepared the religion which afterwards found its fulfillment in the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord. We are right, therefore, in calling Abraham the first of the Pilgrim Fathers. He left his country for a new world because he wished to be free to worship God and to serve him.

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ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

ANSWERING THE CALL

Heb. 11: 8-10

When the people of a later age thought about Abraham they wondered at his prompt obedience to the strange call which came to him. Centuries after, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews said, "By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Abraham did not question the command of God. We are told that he obeyed immediately, and went forth. It was a new and entirely untried experience for him.

Later on in his experience in the Promised Land he was still obedient to his call. The familiar story of how he separated from Lot and gave to his nephew the more luxuriant pastures of the valley, and chose for himself the harder life of the hills, reveals a continuation of obedience to the divine command. It was always obedience that was based on faith. He preferred to choose the companionship of God rather than the companionship of the people of Sodom. There was no fear in his heart that God would forsake him and the result of his choice proved that he was right, for Lot and his family fell into worldly and wicked temptations whereas Abraham and his family continued in their loyalty to God and the right. Although Abraham was called the friend of God he was nevertheless the loyal servant of God and did those things which were demanded without hesitation and without excuse.

Obedience is the law of life. The world is obedient to the law and the will of God. Behind every star that shines and every flower that blooms there is obedience to the word and the will of God. There can be no beauty and no peace except where life conforms to the eternal law of life and what is true out in the world is true in relation to our own hearts and lives. If God is our Father, and we are his children, one of the first requisites is obedience to the divine will. The source of all true obedience is love.

A MAN OF FAITH

Heb. 11: 17-19

Perhaps the most wonderful story in the life of Abraham is found in the twenty-second chapter of Genesis. It is the story of how God proved Abraham by asking him to offer up his son Isaac upon the altar as a human sacrifice. It seems a terrible thing to suggest, and it is possible that we may not understand it unless we remember that in those days in the surrounding nations it was a customary thing for people to offer their children as human sacrifices to their gods. We can understand how this custom grew up. It is always right and proper for us to give God our best and the best with us is what we love most and Abraham loved Isaac his son more than he loved anything else in the world. Isaac was the child of promise; he had been given to Abraham in his old age as a pledge of God's goodness and loving favor, and it is easy to understand how Abraham would come to think that perhaps God might wish to receive from him his child, which was his most priceless possession.

If you will read the story you will understand what a terrible experience it was for Abraham when, in obedience to God's command, he prepared to offer up his son Isaac in sacrifice. Everything was ready, the wood and the fire and the knife, but at the last moment God spoke and said, "Abraham, Abraham," and he said, "Here am I." And God said, "Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

This was God's way of teaching Abraham and his followers that human sacrifices were not to be offered as they were offered among the heathen peoples. God does demand sacrifice and the very best we have, but not in this way. The sacrifices of God belong to life and not to death. Abraham found a ram caught in the thicket which he offered in sacrifice instead of Isaac. After that Isaac his son was dearer to him, for in a very real sense he had given him to God.

It is one of the most wonderful examples of faith in the Bible. Jesus once spoke about Abraham and said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." Perhaps Abraham had caught a vision of something like the sacrifice of Christ, for the supreme sacrifice is to give oneself as a living sacrifice to God.

ABRAHAM THE FAITHFUL

Abraham is often called the father of the faithful. He believed in God; he believed in the unseen world; he believed in the promises of God. We must remember that Abraham did not have as much to guide him as we have. He had been born among people who were idolaters, but little by little God revealed himself to him until he came into a firm belief in the divine fatherhood of God.

There is an old story which tells us how Abraham came to believe in one God. The story is told in the words of the Koran, the Mohammedan Bible. "When night overshadowed him, he saw a star, and said, 'This is my Lord,' But when it set, he said, 'I like not those that set.' And when he saw the moon rising, he said, 'This is my Lord.' But when the moon set, he answered, 'Verily, if my Lord direct me not in the right way, I shall be as one of those who err.' And when he saw the sun rising, he said: 'This is my Lord. This is greater than the star or moon.' But when the sun went down, he said: 'O my people, I am clear of these things. I turn my face to him who hath made the heaven and the earth.'"

Abraham's life was not an easy life. It was a life that was tried as in the fire, but as gold is tried so Abraham's faith was tried and he came out of the fire tested and tried and has become the world's example of a man in whom faith triumphed over every difficulty.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Where in the Bible do you find the story of Abraham?
2. Give the names of some of those associated with Abraham.
3. What promise did God make to Abraham?
4. How is Abraham an example to us of faith?
5. What sacrifice did Abraham make?
6. Why was Abraham called "the friend of God"?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 20. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A. Faith in Jesus Christ is believing on him and trusting him as our own Saviour and Lord.

Q. 21. How does God lead us to believe on Jesus Christ?

A. God leads us to believe on Jesus Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, showing us that we are sinful, and disposing and enabling us to accept him as he is offered to us in the gospel.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Where and when was Abraham born?
2. What do we mean when we say that God called Abraham?
3. Trace on the map Abraham's journey to Canaan.
4. What reward did Abraham receive from God?
5. What mistakes did Abraham make?
6. Why is Abraham called "the father of the faithful"?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 16. Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression?

A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.

JOSEPH, THE PRESERVER OF HIS PEOPLE

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee."—Ex. 20: 12.

TEXT OF LESSON, Gen. 45: 3-15

For entire lesson, see Gen. 30: 22-24; 37: 2 to 50: 26

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5 And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and there are yet five years, in which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest.

7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance.

8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

9 Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me Lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not;

10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

11 And there will I nourish thee; for there are yet five years of famine; lest thou come to poverty, thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast.

12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen: and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15 And he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

3 And Jo'seph said unto his brethren, I *am* Jo'seph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4 And Jo'seph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I *am* Jo'seph your brother, whom ye sold into E'gypt.

5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

6 For these two years *hath* the famine *been* in the land: and yet *there are* five years, in the which *there shall* neither *be* earing nor harvest.

7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 So now *it was* not you *that* sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pha'raoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of E'gypt.

9 Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Jo'seph, God hath made me lord of all E'gypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Go'shen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

11 And there will I nourish thee; for yet *there are* five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Ben'ja-min, that *it is* my mouth that speaketh unto you.

13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in E'gypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14 And he fell upon his brother Ben'ja-min's neck, and wept; and Ben'ja-min wept upon his neck.

15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

The Time—About 1846-1736 B.C. **The Places**—Canaan, Egypt.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, April 9	The Favorite Child	Gen. 37 : 1-4.
Tuesday, April 10	Joseph Sold by His Brothers	Gen. 37 : 18-28.
Wednesday, April 11	Joseph Interpreting Pharaoh's Dreams	Gen. 41 : 25-36.
Thursday, April 12	Joseph Honored	Gen. 41 : 37-45.
Friday, April 13	Joseph Forgiving His Brothers	Gen. 45 : 3-11.
Saturday, April 14	Joseph and His Father	Gen. 46 : 28-34.
Sunday, April 15	The Source of Deliverance	Psalm 20.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

8. A father to Pharaoh. A title of honor and respect. See Isa. 22: 21.

10. Land of Goshen. The land lying east of the Nile, a few miles northeast of Cairo. A very fertile region.

11. Nourish thee. Joseph would be responsible for them and see to their well-being.

A YOUNG MAN AND HIS DREAMS

Joseph was just a little lad when his mother died. His mother's name was Rachel, and the story of her life is one of the most beautiful stories in the Bible. She was a beautiful woman, and Jacob, Joseph's father, had loved her when he first saw her. She died near Bethlehem when Benjamin was born, and her tomb is shown to travelers even now on the road between Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Joseph was greatly beloved of his father. He had one full brother, Benjamin, who was seven years younger than he, and ten half brothers, the children of other wives which his father had. Among all these children Jacob loved Joseph best. He was his favorite and for him his father had made "a coat of many colors." This sort of coat was worn by people of dignity and position. This favoritism made Joseph's brothers jealous of him, and their envy made his life unhappy and dangerous. Joseph had great ideas as to what he would become. For example, he dreamed that he saw the sun and moon and eleven stars bowed down to him. The sun and the moon represented his father and mother, and the eleven stars his brothers. He was foolish enough to tell this dream, and, of course, he was hated all the more. Nevertheless, his unusual qualities gave promise that he would be an unusual man. All great men have been dreamers. That is to say, they have been ambitious and have seen as in a dream what life might be to them. In a certain sense he was dissatisfied with himself and dreamed of the great things which he would do in the days to come. This was not in itself a bad thing. Abraham dreamed of "the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Moses dreamed of the time when his people would be free from Egyptian slavery. Luther dreamed of the time when the Church would become pure and free from hypocrisy. Lincoln dreamed of a time when his country would be free from slavery and his dreams came true. The great thing about dreams, however, is their interpretation. We must make our dreams come true, and Joseph was willing to pay the price. He came into the place of power because of his willingness to prepare himself for that place.

A YOUNG MAN AND HIS TEMPTATIONS

Joseph was about seventeen when the story of his life begins. He fell into the hands of his brethren to whom his father had sent him on an errand, and they, taking advantage of his helplessness, purposed in their hearts to destroy him, and having cast him into a pit, were ready to leave him there to die. They were led, however, to draw him out of the pit and sell him to merchants who were passing through the country on their way to Egypt. In this way Joseph passed out of his family life at Hebron into the busy life of Egypt with its idolatry and temptations. He was sold as a slave in the markets of Egypt to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard. That seemed a strange sequel to his dream but the end was not yet, for Joseph was in training for what God had in store for him. There in the house of Potiphar he met with temptation. He was tempted to be disloyal to his master through the temptation which Potiphar's wife presented to him. It did not seem policy on his part to oppose the woman who had his life in her hands, but, nevertheless, Joseph was true and loyal and his reply to her temptation was, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

There were two things that made him strong. The first was his thought of his master. Potiphar had trusted him and had honored him and had given him place and possessions and responsibility, and he knew it would be disloyal for him to betray that trust, and commit a crime against one who had been his friend. No man can sin alone. His sin touches the lives of others and the tragedy is that it touches those whom we love best. The second thing that kept Joseph true was his thought of God. Robert Browning has a little poem called "The Worst of It" and what is the worst of it? It is what God will think. This was the thought which kept Joseph pure in heart. He called the temptation by its right name. He called it a sin, and turned away from it as from a thing evil in the sight of God.

Joseph was not rewarded for his loyalty, but was sent to prison. That was a strange reward for keeping his honor pure. Nevertheless, life often brings to us strange happenings. Bunyan remained in prison for preaching the gospel. In the same way John the Baptist and Peter and Paul suffered, and in the more tragic sense Jesus came face to face with the cross, not because of any wrongdoing, but because they had lived blameless lives in the midst of a wicked world. Joseph's prison, however, became a highway to the throne.

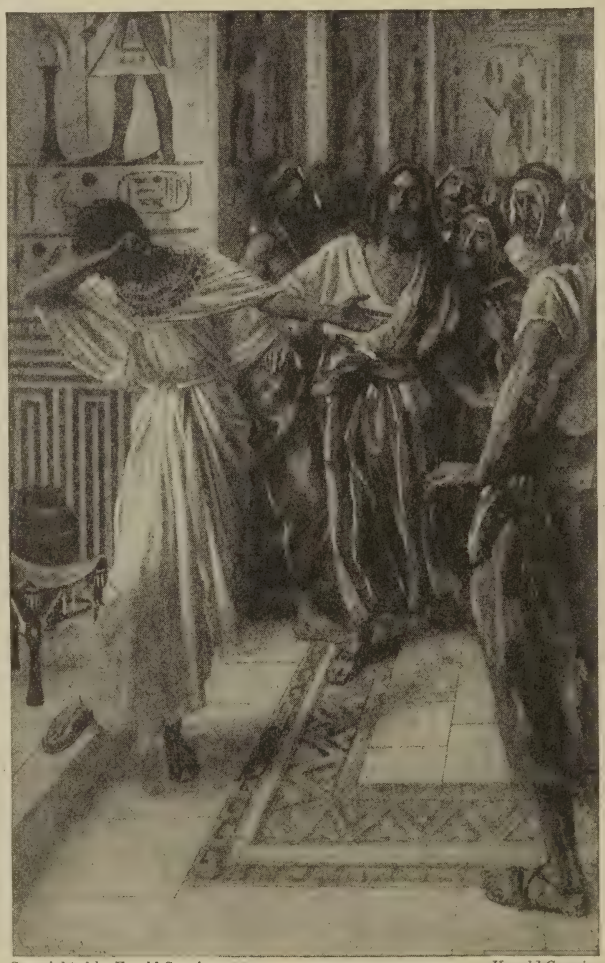
God fulfills his purposes in strange ways, Joseph had been pampered and spoiled by being the favorite child, and by means of enduring hardness, first the pit and then the prison, he was made strong to endure the discipline of life, and so became qualified for the position which God had in store for him. We can see, too, that in the prison Joseph met many people high in the affairs of state who afterwards became helpful to him in his work in the world.

A YOUNG MAN AND HIS LIFE WORK

We need not follow through the long story of Joseph's two years in prison. There he became a favorite and was given much liberty and some responsibility. There he interpreted the dreams of the butler and the baker. This incident afterwards led to his being brought forth to interpret the dream of Pharaoh about the seven fat cattle and the seven lean cattle.

Joseph was thirty years of age when he came before Pharaoh. He had traveled a strange road, and yet while he was still a young man he had come into a place of power. The work of the world has often been done by young men. At eighteen Spurgeon was famous as a preacher; at nineteen Washington was a major; at twenty Alexander was called great; when he was twenty-three Browning had written a great poem, and at twenty-eight Napoleon had revolutionized Europe. We are not surprised that at thirty Joseph was next in power to Pharaoh, King of Egypt.

Two things had given him his place in the world. First of all, his fidelity to duty. He had been a great dreamer, but his dreams did not interfere with his duty. Wherever he was, in his home, or in the prison, he had been faithful to his task. Because of his fidelity in telling the truth about his brethren he had incurred their enmity, and because of his fidelity and faithfulness in the prison he had been given a place of responsibility which later led to his freedom and to his being given honor before Pharaoh. In the second place he had faith in God. He said, "I fear God." In answer to Pharaoh's request that he interpret the dream he said, "God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace." To his brothers who were alarmed when they found him in the palace in Egypt he said, "It was not you that sent me hither, but God." To the wife of Potiphar he said, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" God was a reality to Joseph. Because he was loyal to God, power came to him, not power which was simply a matter of personal honor or gratification, but power which enabled him to be of service in the work of the world.



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JOSEPH MADE KNOWN TO HIS BROTHERS

A YOUNG MAN AND HIS HOME

Joseph was given supreme power under Pharaoh to prepare for the famine in Egypt. Eleven years he had been in the home of Potiphar, two years he had been in prison, and nine years he had been next to Pharaoh in power when he was brought face to face with his brethren who had betrayed him more than twenty years before. It is a romantic and marvelous story. The famine that had touched Egypt had also touched Canaan, and hearing that there was provision in Egypt the brethren were sent by Jacob down into Egypt.

It is not necessary for us to follow the long and interesting story of how Joseph hid his identity from his brothers and refused to make himself known. Sometimes the story seems cruel when we

read of the way in which he treated his anxious brethren and retained Simeon, which brought additional grief to his father's heart. The key to the situation, however, is to be found in the fact that Joseph was not acquainted with the character of his brethren. We can forgive only those who are ready to be forgiven. We can forgive and forget only when there is a change of mind on the part of those who have done wrong. Joseph did not know whether the brethren who had sold him as a slave and who had been ready to kill him were ready to receive forgiveness from his hands, and so he waited and watched, suffering all the time more than they did, and at last when he knew their changed feelings toward him and toward their father he made himself known.

One of the strange things about the story is Joseph's silence for twenty years. He was in a position of power and could have sent a message back to his old father, and to his home that he was alive. It is not necessary for us to try to answer this question, however, for times were different and family life was not so well tied together as it is now. Distances were great, and besides all this, Joseph was not sure and did not know the character and disposition of the men who had once been willing to be his murderers. Perhaps he thought it was better and safer for him to keep quiet until they should reveal their need to him.

A YOUNG MAN AND HIS RELIGION

In the old building of the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago, a place where many found Christ, there was a picture of an eye. It seemed to follow you wherever you sat. Underneath the picture were the words, "Thou God seest me." It represented the idea that wherever we are in life the eye of God is upon us. This was the idea which motived Joseph's life. Joseph knew that God was watching him and caring for him. He understood that his life had been planned by God. It was not an accident that he was in Egypt or had come to a place of power. Neither was it because of his own talent or his own ability. To his brethren who were perplexed over the turn in their family affairs, Joseph said, "It was not you that sent me hither, but God." This fear of God in his own heart made Joseph true not only as a statesman in saving the lives of people in famine, but true as a son and brother. He carried through life a loyalty to the highest ideals and his high position in Egypt did not spoil him, or make him forget. The ideals which had been in the heart of his great-grandfather Abraham still possessed him, and when Joseph had brought comfort and hope to his old home and came to die he "said unto his brethren, I die; but God will surely visit you, and bring you up out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." Later on when the people of Israel left Egypt on their way back to Canaan during the Exodus the bones of Joseph were carried to his fatherland and laid to rest there in the land that was dedicated to faith and God.

WHAT HOME MEANS

There is no virtue so to be envied as loyalty to one's home and family. The Fifth Commandment says, "Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Here is a story from one of America's great men:

In Atlanta there is a statue to one of the great men of the Southland, the journalist, Henry W. Grady. It is told of him that when he was well on in life, and charged with public cares, one day without a word, he left his office, and no one knew where he had gone. From Thursday until Monday his chair was vacant, and the office force looked at one another and kept their own counsel. No one knew what had become of him. When Monday came he returned with a smile on his face, and a spring in his step, and later it became known what had happened. He had slipped off to the old homestead to see his mother. He had been absent for months, and when he came to his mother, he said, "Your boy has been out in the world and has been losing his ideals, and he has come back to be a boy again." She understood. There was no rebuke, no complaint. He had come home to his mother full of wounds and weariness. She prepared the food that he had liked in childhood, and as she went about her simple duties she sang the old familiar songs of long ago. When the evening lamp was lighted and the shades were drawn she read the sweet and tender words from the old Book, which she took from the shelf beside the fire. When he lay down to rest, it was her hand that smoothed the pillow, and in her presence he prayed the prayer of his childhood:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep."

Was there any wonder that when he returned to his task, there was a new light in his face, and a new love in his eye? He had been comforted, strengthened, remade, and for him there was a new heaven and a new earth.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Who were Joseph's father and mother?
2. Why was he disliked by his brethren?
3. How did hardships prepare him for his work in the world?
4. What position did he hold in Egypt?
5. Why did he not immediately make himself known to his brethren?
6. In what way did Joseph show himself to be a true son and brother?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 22. What is the work of the Holy Spirit in us who believe?

A. The work of the Holy Spirit in us who believe is to give us hatred of sin and love of righteousness, knowledge of the truth, power for service, and assurance that we are children of God.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What was unusual about Joseph's life?
2. How did Joseph overcome temptation?
3. Did his life in prison help or hinder him?
4. What was his policy in preparing for the famine?
5. What marks of wisdom did Joseph show in his treatment of his family?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 17. Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?

A. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

Lesson IV—MOSES: LIBERATOR AND LAWGIVER

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah."—Ex. 14: 13.

TEXT OF LESSON, Ex. 14: 10, 13-22

For entire lesson, see Ex., chs. 2 to 19; 32; 33; Deut. 34: 1-8

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

Ex. 14: 10 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians were marching after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto Jehovah.

* * * * *

13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah, which he will work for you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

14 Jehovah will fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

15 And Jehovah said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.

16 And lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thy hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go into the midst of the sea on dry ground.

17 And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall go in after them: and I will get me honor upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

18 And the Egyptians shall know that I am Jehovah, when I have gotten me honor upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

19 And the angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud removed from before them, and stood behind them:

20 And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud and the darkness, yet gave it light by night: and the one came not near the other all the night.

21 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and Jehovah caused the sea to go *back* by

AUTHORIZED VERSION

Ex. 14: 10 ¶ And when Pha'raoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the E-gyp'tians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD.

* * * * *

13 ¶ And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the E-gyp'tians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

14 The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

15 ¶ And the LORD said unto Mo'ses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Is'ra-el, that they go forward:

16 But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Is'ra-el shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea.

17 And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the E-gyp'tians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pha'raoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

18 And the E-gyp'tians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pha'raoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

19 ¶ And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Is'ra-el, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:

20 And it came between the camp of the E-gyp'tians and the camp of Is'ra-el; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them,* but it gave light by night *to these:* so that the one came not near the other all the night.

21 And Mo'ses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a

a strong east wind all the night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

22 And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land,* and the waters were divided.

22 And the children of Is'ra-el went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground:* and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

The Time—About 1400-1280 B.C. **The Places**—Egypt, Arabia.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, April 16	Birth and Rescue of Moses	Ex. 2 : 1-10.
Tuesday, April 17	The Call of Moses	Ex. 3 : 1-10.
Wednesday, April 18	Through the Red Sea	Ex. 14 : 13-22.
Thursday, April 19	Moses on the Mount	Ex. 19 : 16-20.
Friday, April 20	The Ten Commandments	Ex. 20 : 3-17.
Saturday, April 21	The Death of Moses	Deut. 34 : 1-8.
Sunday, April 22	God, the Deliverer	Psalm 70.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

10. Pharaoh. The title applied to the king of Egypt. The Pharaoh of the Exodus is believed to have been Meneptah.

14. Hold your peace. Victory would not be theirs, but God's. If the people trusted God he would lead them safely. See Isa. 30: 15.

16. The sea. The crossing was doubtless at some point north of what is now called Suez.

22. A wall unto them. The water on each side was a protection to them, preventing an attack.

BETWEEN THE LESSONS

Our last lesson was taken from the book of Genesis. The story of Moses, with which this lesson deals, begins with the second chapter of Exodus. Between Genesis and Exodus there is a great silence. After Joseph's death a long period of servitude took place, which, according to Ex. 12: 40, lasted for four hundred and thirty years. The Hebrew people had grown too numerous and too powerful for the Egyptians and in order to reduce their numbers and to prevent their exercising power severe laws were enacted against them. Male children were to be destroyed and the people were to be kept in subjection by hard labor. All their lives they had been simple agricultural people, tilling the ground, and tending their flocks and herds. The land of Goshen, which had been given to them by Joseph was fertile and productive, and there the Hebrew people multiplied and grew. They were taken, however, from these simple pursuits, and made to labor at building the store cities of Pharaoh. The Pharaoh of the oppression, spoken of in the first chapters of Exodus, was probably Ramses II, and one of his successors was Meneptah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus. They made the lives of the Hebrew people bitter with hard bondage. The cry of the Hebrew people went up to God, and God heard it. God had a purpose in this period of depression and slavery in the preparation of his people. It acted as a discipline to their souls as well as to their minds. It threw them back upon God, and caused them to know that he only could be their Deliverer. They were brought to understand that they were God's people, "the sheep of his pasture," and that they were in his keeping.

CHILDHOOD OF MOSES

God had a plan for the redemption of his people, and that plan was centered in the person of a little child. The story of the life of Moses begins when he was a little baby under sentence of death because of the cruel edict of the Egyptian king. It is interesting to compare the childhood of Moses with that of Jesus. They were both leaders of their people, and their life story begins back in the obscure days of childhood, and both came into life in the midst of danger and oppression. Moses was born near the capital of Egypt. His parents were Hebrew people, Levites, his father Amram, and his mother Jochebed, a woman of piety and courage. He was a beautiful and attractive child, and to save his life his mother adopted the plan of hiding him in a basket among the rushes by the riverside. He had one brother, Aaron, and a sister, Miriam, and the sister took up her watch beside the little babe. Josephus tells us that his mother was led to do what she did by divine revelation. Whether that be so or not certainly it proved to be to the advantage of her child. Nothing is said of the sacrifice which the mother made in surrendering her child to the hands of the stranger. Perhaps she was satisfied to know that the boy was safe and would be trained for a position of power. The story of how the Egyptian princess, the daughter of Pharaoh, discovered the hidden child in the basket and named him "Moses" is known to every child. Old Jewish writers say she was married, but had no children, and bestowed all her love on this little adopted Hebrew child. The crying child appealed to her heart. Through Miriam's quick thinking she gave him to his own mother to care for. Later he was taken to the palace where he grew up as her child and was trained in all the knowledge and wisdom of the Egyptians.

AT SCHOOL IN THE PALACE

In this strange and wonderful way God prepared Moses for his life's work. He belonged to the race that was oppressed and now he was to be educated by the oppressor. In this way Moses was fitted for leadership. He was brought into sympathy with all classes of people and thus acquainted with life he was able to understand people of both races and of different ranks in life. There is an old story to the effect that he had many attractive qualities and that once he saved the Egyptian army from overthrow by assuming military leadership. These traditions may be based upon truth, and Moses may have gained much of his leadership and his ability to direct great masses of people from his training and discipline in the Egyptian palace. God does not call men by accident into leadership. Behind every leader's life there is a long period of careful preparation. Behind the life of Paul there was an extraordinary training which fitted him for the peculiar work to which God called him. Behind the life of Lincoln there was the discipline and schooling which made him fit for his unique position of leadership. The training which we are subject to in the school and in the home and out in the world, while it is often difficult and at times discouraging, nevertheless fits us for the work in the world to which God is calling us.

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MOSES AND THE BURNING BUSH

THE CHOICE OF MOSES

Moses was forty years old when he left the Egyptian palace. He seemed never to forget that he belonged to the Hebrew people. He enjoyed all the luxury of the palace but his heart was with his oppressed kinsfolk. He did not forget that he belonged to the race that was oppressed by the very power that had befriended him. It would have been natural had he forgotten about his people and related himself to his friends in the palace where a place of power would have been made for him and his comfort and success assured. It is to his honor that his sympathy went out to his oppressed people. We are told how he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, and, after looking around to see that no man was watching, killed the Egyptian and hid the body in the sand. It was a rash act and the result of impulse, but it revealed the way Moses' mind was turning and when it came to him that his act was known and had been reported to Pharaoh Moses knew that the hour had come for him to leave the palace and identify himself with his own people.

Perhaps Moses felt unprepared for the task to which God was calling him, and at the same time his experience with his own people showed him how hopeless and helpless such a task would be. Nevertheless the choice had to be made, and he turned his back upon the luxury and opportunities of the palace and went out into the wilderness in answer to the challenge of his own heart. It was one of the great choices of the world, and centuries after a writer in speaking of his choice said, "By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to share ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked unto the recompense of reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." It was a sacrifice of a high order, but it was also a sacrifice which brought blessing, honor, and glory to the man who made it. It could be said of Moses that he was rich, but for the sake of his people he became poor.

THE CALL OF MOSES

The life of Moses falls into three periods of forty years each. Forty years he was in the palace of Pharaoh; forty years he was in the wilderness; and forty years he held the position of emancipator and leader of his people.

The forty years in the wilderness of Midian were years of quiet meditation and preparation. Fleeing from Egypt he found a refuge with the priest Jethro, whose daughter Zipporah he married and there in the wilderness he led the flocks of his father-in-law and meditated upon the afflictions of

his people, and waited upon God in prayer. The story of how God called him is very familiar. One day as he watched the flock he beheld a burning bush, and when he drew near to see why the bush that burned was not consumed, "God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."

The time had now come for Moses to act as God's minister to Pharaoh, and while he was reluctant to go and offered many excuses and suggestions, yet in the end he turned his back upon the wilderness and with Aaron, his brother, entered into the presence of the king of Egypt and demanded freedom for his people.

Forty years seem a long time to wait. Perhaps Moses thought that the time would never come when God would keep his promise to his people. Thomas Carlyle once said, "God is never in a hurry." By this he meant that God seemed slow to act, but God cannot act without helpers. God could not do without Moses, even as Moses could do nothing without God, and when Moses was ready God called him to his life's task. He felt incapable and unprepared but the Lord promised to go with him and equip him for service and in humility and in faith, having seen the burning bush unconsumed and having heard the voice of God, he went forth.

"Had Moses failed to go, had God
Granted his prayer, there would have been
For him no leadership to win—
No pillared fire, no magic rod,
No wonders in the land of Zin;

"No smiting of the sea—no tears
Ecstatic shed on Sinai's steep—
No Nebo, with a God to keep
His burial! Only forty years
Of desert-watching with his sheep!"

THE MESSENGER OF GOD

God had said to Moses, "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh," and although Moses was unwilling to go, yet after the revelation of power to him he set forth on his great mission. God had promised to go with him and had revealed to him the name that made clear the inner character of God himself. Moses was nothing; God was everything. "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." The conflict with Pharaoh was long and bitter. Pharaoh was hard-hearted, but Moses was brave and courageous. The ten plagues followed one another in rapid succession, and there was hesitation and indecision, and at last resentment on the part of the Egyptian king. Finally, there was the celebration of the great feast of the passover when the Hebrew people were safe in their homes behind the sprinkled blood, while there was mourning in the houses of the Egyptians and the passover was slain and eaten. This passover became the great national birthday of the Hebrew people, and was commemorated by our Lord before his death, and by him changed to the Lord's Supper. The trials and difficulties through which the people of God had been brought fashioned them into a national unity, and all down through their long history they kept the feast of the passover in commemoration of their emancipation from slavery, and their entrance into the freedom of the people of God.

EMANCIPATION

The word "emancipation" is familiar to all those who know American history. In the great dark days of the Civil War Abraham Lincoln wrote out the few words which gave freedom to the slaves of the Southland. The words of Lincoln's "Emancipation Proclamation" read "That on the first day of January, 1863, all persons held as slaves within any state or designated part of state, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be thenceforward and forever free."

Just as Lincoln was the messenger in the hands of God to give freedom to the American slaves, so Moses was God's messenger to give freedom to the Hebrew slaves. Opposed by Pharaoh, the people under Moses went forward, an unarmed band, out of the midst of Egypt. In obedience to God's command they went forward and the sea opened to let them pass. They passed through on dry land and the Egyptians followed them, and were drowned in the very sea that had brought security to the people of God. Freed from Egyptian oppression they entered into what is known as the wilderness, and there wandered for a period of forty years. There is not sufficient space to give even the outline of that period of wandering. It is full of familiar and marvelous stories. The people murmured and rebelled and Moses was patient and long-suffering. God fed them with manna out of heaven and led them by means of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

At Sinai after a year's journeying, God revealed himself through Moses in the giving of the law and the Ten Commandments. The way was not easy and when on the border of Canaan at Kadesh the people's faith failed on account of the report of the spies they were turned back into the wilderness for thirty-eight weary years. After forty years Moses and Joshua led the people into the

land of Moab, and from the hills of Moab they could see the fertile valley of the Promised Land.

THE DEATH OF MOSES

The story of the sin of Moses is told in Num., ch. 20. After years of wandering in the wilderness they came to the wilderness of Zin, and because they found there no water the people murmured. Moses became angry and impatient and resentful, and treated their murmuring as an offense against himself, and instead of giving glory to God, suggested that he himself had power in his own hands when he smote the rock and water flowed forth. God rebuked Moses and told him that while he would see the Promised Land he would not be allowed to enter. The story of his death is told in the last chapter of Deuteronomy. It is one of the most appealing stories in the Bible, and every pupil should read it. There we read that Moses died upon Mount Nebo on the top of Pisgah. He was a hundred and twenty years old when he died. "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." We read there, too, that God buried him in the valley in the land of Moab. He is called by God "Moses my servant."

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. How much time elapsed between Joseph and Moses?
2. What was the condition of the Hebrews when Moses was born?
3. What benefits did Moses receive in the palace in Egypt?
4. What training did Moses acquire in the wilderness?
5. Why is Moses called the "lawgiver"?
6. Why was Moses not permitted to enter the Promised Land?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 23. What is the duty and privilege of those who believe on Jesus Christ?

A. The duty and privilege of those who believe on Jesus Christ is to confess him before men and to come into the full communion of the Church.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. In what books of the Bible is found the story of Moses?
2. How was Moses specially trained for his life work?
3. Name some of Moses' helpers.
4. Trace the wandering of the children of Israel.
5. What quality do you admire the most in the life of Moses?
6. Why is Moses called the leader of his nation?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 18. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consists in, the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin; together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

Lesson V—RUTH, THE FAITHFUL DAUGHTER

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."—Ruth 1: 16.

TEXT OF LESSON, Ruth 1: 14-22

For entire lesson, see The Book of Ruth

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her god: return thou after thy sister-in-law.

16 And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God;

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: Jehovah do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.

18 And when she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, she left off speaking unto her.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

14 And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Or'pah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.

15 And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.

16 And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, *or* to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God:

17 Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if ought* but death part thee and me.

18 When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

19 ¶ So they two went until they came to Beth'-

19 So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and *the women* said, Is this Naomi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

21 I went out full, and Jehovah hath brought me home again empty; why call ye me Naomi, seeing Jehovah hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, who returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

le-hem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth'le-hem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, *Is* this Na-o'mi?

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Na-o'mi, call me Ma'ra: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

21 I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why *then* call ye me Na-o'mi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22 So Na-o'mi returned, and Ruth the Mo'ab-itess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Mo'ab: and they came to Beth'le-hem in the beginning of barley harvest.

The Time—About 1100 B.C. **The Places**—Moab, Canaan.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, April 23	Naomi and Ruth	Ruth 1 : 6-13.
Tuesday, April 24	Ruth, the Faithful Daughter	Ruth 1 : 14-22.
Wednesday, April 25	Ruth in the Fields of Boaz	Ruth 2 : 1-7.
Thursday, April 26	Ruth, the Wife of Boaz	Ruth 4 : 9-12.
Friday, April 27	Ruth, an Ancestor of David	Ruth 4 : 14-17.
Saturday, April 28	Great David's Greater Son	Ps. 110 : 1-7.
Sunday, April 29	The Safety of the Godly	Psalm 91.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

15. Unto her god. The Moabites were idolaters, and their worship included many cruel practices.

20. Call me Mara. Naomi means "pleasant"; Mara means "bitter."

21. The Almighty. Hebrew "Shaddai." Often used with the word "God," "God Almighty." See Gen. 17: 1; Ex. 6: 3.

22. Barley harvest. The harvest season at Bethlehem would begin in April.

THE STORY OF RUTH

The Book of Ruth contains one of the most interesting stories in the world. Boys and girls are familiar with a series of books entitled "What Every Child Should Know." One of these books contains "Great Stories Every Child Should Know." It contains such stories as "The Great Stone Face," "The King of the Golden River," and "The Man Without a Country." One of the stories is the complete story of "Ruth" as it is found in the Bible. Before you do anything else in the study of this lesson sit down and read it through from beginning to end. It contains only four short chapters and can be read through in fifteen or twenty minutes. It is a model for all story-writers and contains some of the most beautiful language and pictures and people that are found in any writing. Where will you find a prettier picture than that described in the second chapter where Ruth gleans with the reapers in the harvest field? Where will you find more attractive people than are found here: Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz, the gentleman of the old school? Benjamin Franklin once read it to the intellectual people of Paris and they were charmed and delighted with it, and yet were ignorant of the fact that it was a Bible story.

IN THE LAND OF MOAB

The heroine of the story is Ruth, and she has always stood for winsome womanhood. She did not belong to the Jewish nation, and was not a Jewess. She was an idolater. She belonged to the land of Moab which lay on the east side of the Dead Sea. The people of Moab were descendants of Lot, but they had drifted away from the worship of the true God and had become heathen in their faith and practices. Sometimes they were friendly to the Israelites, but more frequently they were bitter enemies.

The story, however, does not start in Moab but at Bethlehem. The country around Bethlehem had been suffering from a terrible famine. The rains had failed and there had been no crops and with famine staring them in the face a family of four persons, the father Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and their two sons Mahlon and Chilion, determined to leave the famine-stricken country and to set out on their journey to Moab where the land still brought forth its harvests. Their neighbors would doubtless think they had turned their backs upon the God of Judah when they set forth for the heathen land of Moab. There is no reason, however, to believe that they relinquished their faith in God, and perhaps the story is meant to show us that in Moab as in Judah the same God ruled over all. Nevertheless, sorrow and failure came to the

family in their new home. First the father and then the two sons died, and Naomi was left a widow in a foreign country, and all that was left to her were the two Moabite women whom her two sons had married and who were also now left desolate. Husband and children were gone. She was poor and alone, and in her loneliness her thoughts turned to her home and to her fatherland. It is a terrible thing to be alone in a strange land and at the same time to be poor. Perhaps she, too, felt that the hand of God was upon her for leaving the country of her fathers for a heathen land. She heard that the famine had ended in Judah and that there was bread enough and to spare, and so "Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law, Go, return each of you to her mother's house: Jehovah deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. Jehovah grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voice, and wept."

Calderon

RUTH AND NAOMI

THE HOME IN BETHLEHEM

At first both refused to return, but at last Orpah was persuaded to go back to her people, but Ruth clung to Naomi and insisted upon following her. Ruth had evidently been led not only into friendship with Naomi, but also into a true faith in Naomi's God. She was ready to leave her home and country and her heathen religion for the home and religion of her dead husband and his mother. Her words are among the most beautiful words ever spoken. "Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: Jehovah do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

This is the turning point in the story, for the book has a religious message, as well as a human interest. In leaving her home Ruth ceased to be a Moabitess from the point of view of her religion and became an adopted Jewess, believing in God, and breaking with all her former idolatries. The journey across the valley to the hills of Bethlehem must have been sad for these two lonely women. They were going back to poverty even though they were going back to the former friends of Naomi. Then, too, the contrast was strong. Naomi had gone forth with the protection of three strong men. She was returning now as the sole protector of this helpless girl.

RUTH THE GLEANER

We read the "city was moved" when they came to Bethlehem. The people scarcely knew Naomi, and said, "Is this Naomi?" and she replied without reproach, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." "Them," v. 20, perhaps refers to the people that thought her removal to the land of Moab was a judgment upon her and perhaps Naomi may have thought so, too. She had gone out full, and the Lord had brought her home again empty. This was the way she looked at it. She said, "Jehovah hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me." The story begins from this point to emphasize the character of Ruth. She was deeply attached to Naomi and was not ashamed of her poverty. She immediately began to support herself and her mother-in-law, and we find her out among the poor in the harvest field gleaning among the ears of grain which were left by the reapers. It is at this point that the romance of the story begins to interest us. It happened that the field in which she gleaned belonged to a man by the name of Boaz. He was rich and much older than Ruth, but belonged to the family of Elimelech. Boaz took notice of Ruth and asked who she was. Something in her demeanor or conduct set her apart from the rest, or perhaps knowing the other gleaners he knew that she was a stranger among them. When he discovered that she was the daughter-in-law of Naomi, a Moabitess, he gave orders that privileges should be given her, and that no one should interfere with her. He spoke to Ruth, and said, "Go not to glean in another field, neither

pass from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens. Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.''

Ruth had known sorrow and distress for some time and at last kindness and good cheer had come to her. At mealtime she ate in the company of Boaz with the reapers and returned home in the evening with a bountiful supply of grain and with a story that thrilled the heart of Naomi.

THE PLAN OF NAOMI

Ruth continued to glean in the field of Boaz to the end of the barley and of the wheat harvest. Gradually a friendship grew up between them and while her modesty and humility never left her, his favor was extended to her and her heart was glad because of his kindness. As the harvest came to an end Naomi, more experienced and farseeing, worked out a plan of her own. It was bold, and perhaps a delicate plan, but it was outlined by a woman who knew life. It is possible she knew more about the relations between Ruth and Boaz than is actually given us in the story. There was a law among the Hebrews to the effect that if an Israelite became poor and was forced to sell his field the duty of the next of kin was to buy it back again. If a man was sold as a slave his kinsman's duty was to redeem him again. If a man died without children, leaving a widow behind him, it was the duty of the next of kin to marry the widow. It was this law that Naomi was thinking about when she planned for Ruth's happiness. Ruth was advised to go to the threshing floor, and take up her place beside Boaz and in the night to claim his protection as her near kinsman. Doubtless Boaz was in love with Ruth, but had not declared himself, and perhaps for several reasons. In the first place he was much older than Ruth, and perhaps hesitated to embarrass her and in the second place he knew that there was a nearer relative to Naomi and Ruth than he was, and honorable as he was he would not deal falsely with the nearer relative.

When Ruth made her wishes known according to the custom of the time Boaz immediately said, ''Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as Jehovah liveth: lie down until the morning.'' The story says very plainly that Boaz was glad at heart. He said to Ruth, ''Blessed be thou of Jehovah, my daughter: thou hast showed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.'' She returned home with six measures of barley, as much as she could carry, which told its own story to Naomi. The words of Naomi are interesting, and show that she understood what was going on in the heart of Boaz. ''Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall; for the man will not rest, until he have finished the thing this day.''

RUTH AND BOAZ

Naomi was speaking the truth when she said that Boaz would not rest until he had finished the thing. He took up his place at the gate which was the open forum where people met one another, and where business was transacted. When the near kinsman came Boaz approached him and told him the story of Naomi's need and of the lost farm which should be redeemed. The kinsman was very willing to buy the land and offered to do so, and Boaz felt that his own chance was slipping away from him. ''What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.'' The kinsman, however, while willing to redeem the land, was not willing to accept Ruth the Moabitess as his wife. Perhaps he had his own home and his own family, and perhaps, too, he did not wish to be entangled with one who was a Moabitess. At any rate he refused and Boaz was free to claim Ruth for himself.

It was a peculiar custom in those days for a man to confirm a bargain by giving his shoe, and so the near kinsman drew off his shoe and gave it to Boaz in the presence of the people. Publicly Boaz declared his intention not only to buy the land that formerly belonged to Elimelech, Chilion, and Mahlon, but also to accept Ruth, the Moabitess, as his wife. The story suggests that evidently Ruth was a great favorite with the people of Bethlehem and they showed their approval of the purpose which Boaz had announced.

THE MEANING OF THE STORY

The stories of the Bible, like all good stories, end well, and the story closes with Ruth a happy wife and still happier mother. Naomi, too, is happy, and spends the closing days of her life in the love and affection of her daughter-in-law and her husband. The people of the village were warm in their congratulations, and said unto Naomi, as she held Ruth's child in her arms, ''Blessed be Jehovah, who hath not left thee this day without a near kinsman; and let his name be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of life, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, who loveth thee, who is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him.''

Here the story closes, but the meaning of it must be found in the last few verses which are but the repetition of a long list of names. Perhaps it does not at once appear why such a dry list of names closes such a sweet and beautiful story. The son of Boaz and Ruth was called Obed, and the son of Obed was Jesse, and the son of Jesse was David,

the king of Israel. If you turn over to the first chapter of Matthew and read down the list until you come to the name of Jesus, you will see that if you go back and back in the ancestry of Jesus you will at last come to Ruth and Boaz. Ruth was a foreigner, a Moabitess, but the love and grace of God is confined to no one people, and her life was related to the life of David who became king of Israel, and to Jesus, who became the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Name the characters in the Book of Ruth.
2. To what country did Ruth belong?
3. What led her to accept the religion of Naomi?
4. Why did she glean grain in the harvest field?
5. How did Boaz show his kindness to Ruth?
6. Why is the story of Ruth in the Bible?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 24. Is there more than one Church?

A. There is only one Church, in which all the saved, in heaven and on earth, are included, and of which Jesus Christ is the Head.

Q. 25. What is the Church on earth?

A. The Church on earth is the whole body of those who confess Christ as Lord and Saviour, together with their children.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What led the family of Naomi to Moab?
2. What circumstances led her to return again to Bethlehem?
3. What qualities do you most admire in Ruth?
4. How would you describe the character of Naomi?
5. What attracts you most in the conduct of Boaz?
6. How was Ruth rewarded for her fidelity?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 19. What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. All mankind, by their fall, lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever.

Lesson VI—SAMUEL: JUDGE AND PROPHET

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Only fear Jehovah, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you."—I Sam. 12: 24.

TEXT OF LESSON, I Sam. 12: 1-5, 20-25

For entire lesson, see I Sam. 1: 1 to 4: 1; 7: 3 to 10: 27; 11: 12 to 13: 15; 15: 1 to 16: 13; 25: 1; 28: 3-20

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

Ch. 12: 1 And Sam'u-el said unto all Is'ra-el, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye have said unto me, and have made a king over you.

2 And now, behold, the king walketh before you; and I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my youth unto this day.

3 Here I am: witness against me before Je-ho'vah, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I taken a ransom to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand.

5 And he said unto them, Je-ho'vah is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found aught in my hand. And they said, He is witness.

* * * * *

20 And Sam'u-el said unto the people, Fear not: ye have indeed done all this evil; yet turn

AUTHORIZED VERSION

Ch. 12: 1 And Sam'u-el said unto all Is'ra-el, Behold, I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.

2 And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons *are* with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day.

3 Behold, here I *am:* witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received *any* bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand.

5 And he said unto them, The LORD *is* witness against you, and his anointed *is* witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, *He is* witness.

* * * * *

20 ¶ And Sam'u-el said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn

not aside from following Je-ho'vah, but serve Je-ho'vah with all your heart:

21 And turn ye not aside; for *then would ye go* after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain.

22 For Je-ho'vah will not forsake his people for his great name's sake, because it hath pleased Je-ho'vah to make you a people unto himself.

23 Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Je-ho'vah in ceasing to pray for you: but I will instruct you in the good and the right way.

24 Only fear Je-ho'vah, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

21 And turn ye not aside: for *then should ye go* after vain *things*, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they *are* vain.

22 For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.

23 Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

24 Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great *things* he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

The Time—About 1120-1014 B.C. **The Place**—Palestine.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, April 30	The Boy Samuel	I Sam. 1 : 21-28.
Tuesday, May 1	Hannah's Song of Thanksgiving	I Sam. 2 : 1-10.
Wednesday, May 2	Samuel Called by God	I Sam. 3 : 1-10.
Thursday, May 3	Samuel Anointing Saul	I Sam. 9 : 25 to 10 : 1.
Friday, May 4	Samuel Anointing David	I Sam. 16 : 6-13.
Saturday, May 5	Samuel—A Faithful Leader	I Sam. 12 : 1-5.
Sunday, May 6	Jehovah, the Judge	Ps. 26 : 1-7.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

2. Behold, the king. Samuel, the last of the Judges, gave place to Saul, the first of the kings.

3. A ransom. "Blood money." Paid to relatives of a murdered man, and forbidden. See Num. 35: 31.

21. Vain things. A word referring to idols.

23. Ceasing to pray. Samuel in giving up his leadership to Saul reserved the right to pray for the people.

THE END OF THE JUDGES

Between the leadership of Moses and that of Samuel lay the disorderly period of what is known as the rule of the Judges. This period lasted between two and four hundred years. It was a period of war and lawlessness. Some of the names of the judges are hardly known to us and others are familiar. The names of Deborah, Jephthah, Samson, and Gideon recall their remarkable work in keeping the nation together, and in triumphing over the cruel nations that surrounded them. The last of the Judges was Samuel. In the days of Samuel the nation had grown more unified and the people were clamoring for a king such as the nations around them had. It was a time of transition and Samuel stood between the past and the present. He was the last of the old order and the first of the new. Consequently, he was blamed by both sides. His life, however, is one of singular strength and attractiveness. The priest Eli in the tabernacle, who watched the Ark and the sacred vessels, had become unable to guide the affairs of the nation. His sons were lawless and wild and the religious life of the people had become disorganized and the worship in the tabernacle an empty form. In the early years of Samuel the Ark was taken by the Philistines but it was soon sent back to Hebrew territory.

THE BOY SAMUEL

Samuel was a child of promise. His birth is surrounded with the same prophecies that attached to the birth of Moses and later to the birth of John the Baptist. His mother's name was Hannah, and his father's name Elkanah. Hannah has been called the "Mary of the Old Testament." Her child was born in answer to prayer, and she gave him the name "Samuel." Her song reminds us very much of the song of Mary called the "Magnificat" and if you will read them both you will come to the conclusion that the Virgin Mary must have known the song of Hannah. If ever there was a child of many prayers that child was Samuel. His life was an answer to prayer, and since he was a gift of God the best thing Hannah could do was to give Samuel back to God again. So from his very birth the child Samuel was dedicated to the service of Jehovah. It is interesting to notice how much the mothers of men have to do with their success and place in the world. The great Lord Shaftesbury once said, "Give me a generation of Christian mothers, and I will undertake to change the face of society in twelve months." John Wesley and Augustine and Moses were guided into their life work by their mothers. When Samuel was old enough to leave his home he was given into

the care of Eli, the priest of God, and his life ever after was identified with the worship of God. The tabernacle became the school and Eli became Samuel's teacher.

THE CALL OF SAMUEL

We are told that as a little lad Samuel ministered unto the Lord in the tabernacle. Eli, the priest, was old and hard of hearing, and almost blind, and Samuel slept in one of the rooms in the tabernacle near him. One night when he was about twelve the call of God came to him. In the silence he heard a voice saying, "Samuel." He thought Eli was calling for him and that he needed help, and because he was obedient and willing, in a moment he was at Eli's side saying, "Here am I." The old priest thought that Samuel had been dreaming, and sent him back to bed, but twice again he came saying, "Thou calledst me" and then Eli knew that God had been calling Samuel and he told him what to say when next the voice was heard.

This time when the voice repeated his name, Samuel answered in the words which Eli had taught him, "Speak; for thy servant heareth." Then God told Samuel about his future and about the calamity that was to fall upon the family of Eli.

The next morning Samuel was asked by Eli what God had said to him, and although he hesitated to tell the old priest who was like a father to him, still he told him everything God had said. Eli replied, "It is Jehovah: let him do what seemeth him good." God calls boys and girls as well as men and women. Indeed it is in the early years that the call of God should come to all of us. God called James Chalmers, when he was a lad in Sunday school, to become a missionary and he became one of the greatest missionaries of the Church to the people of the South Seas. God calls us in many ways, and if we listen to his voice we will hear him even as the boy Samuel heard him in the tabernacle so long ago.

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SAMUEL AND ELI

THE PROPHET OF GOD

This was Samuel's commission to become a prophet and to take Eli's place in the nation. In the Bible he is called a "seer" which means one who is able to see clearly the way of God for men. A prophet is one who speaks to men for God. He is called "Samuel the seer," and in answer to Saul's question he himself said, "I am the seer." He was consulted by everyone on little and big affairs; he was expected to know and understand the word and will of God for his people, and to speak true words to the people no matter what it cost him. It was Samuel who led the people to accept Saul as their first king, and it was Samuel who later, led by God, anointed David to be king in place of Saul. Not only was Samuel a prophet himself, but he founded what we would call a school of the prophets. We would call it to-day a theological seminary where ministers are trained. We find this school of the prophets still in existence in the time of Elijah. Little by little Samuel was able to train up men who knew God and understood how to pray and interpret the word and will of God. In a certain sense Samuel was the first of the long line of prophets about whom we study in the Old Testament, and no one spoke more truly and more sincerely than he. It was an age when people had forgotten God, but God was not always silent and through the lips of his servant Samuel he spoke his words to Saul and to the entire Hebrew nation, guiding, warning, rebuking them.

THE PROPHET AND THE KING

During the life of Samuel the people became restless and clamored for a king. It was a natural thing for them to do, for the nations surrounding them were governed by kings and had a unity which did not belong to the scattered tribes of Israel. Samuel, however, felt that in asking for a king they were turning their backs upon God, whom they had always acknowledged to be their rightful King. Their government had been

called a "theocracy," that is a "God-governed country" and now they wished to have a monarchy, a government by a king. Perhaps they were afraid of Samuel's successors, for Samuel's sons were not like their father, and while Samuel was reluctant to grant their request yet he came to think that it was the right thing and that God would approve his action. It was a difficult thing for him to do, but it shows what a strong and pure-minded man he was to give up his own desires and to fall in line with what he became convinced was the wish of the people and the will of God.

The story of how Saul was selected by Samuel to become king is of great interest. Saul was the son of Kish and belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. The Bible says of him that he was a "young man and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people." His father's asses had been lost and Saul was sent to find them. Unable to find them he sought for Samuel the seer, who, perhaps, would tell him where they were. This is the story. "Now Jehovah had revealed unto Samuel a day before Saul came, saying, To-morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be prince over my people Israel; and he shall save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me. And when Samuel saw Saul, Jehovah said unto him, Behold, the man of whom I spake to thee! this same shall have authority over my people."

When Saul made himself known Samuel invited him to eat with him, telling him the asses had been found. Saul was reluctant to accept the hospitality of the prophet, saying, "Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou to me after this manner?" Samuel, however, took Saul into the guest chamber, and gave him the chief place at the feast which was attended by about thirty persons, and afterwards Samuel and Saul talked together on the housetop. And early in the morning, "about the spring of the day" Samuel before sending Saul away "took the vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not that Jehovah hath anointed thee to be prince over his inheritance?" No one ever had a better start than Saul. He was a choice young man and no one can read the story of the relations between Samuel and Saul without understanding that Samuel loved Saul and gloried in his honor and grieved and sorrowed at his downfall.

SAMUEL'S VALEDICTORY

The lesson which is printed in the Quarterly contains Samuel's last address to the people. He himself was near the end of his life. He had lived a good, strong, faithful life. He had been a wise and careful leader of his people. He had subdued the enemies of the people, had revived the worship of Jehovah and had restored the nation to power and confidence. Now the king had taken his place. The words of his closing address are among the most beautiful in the Bible. "Behold," said Samuel, "I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you. And now, behold, the king walketh before you; and I am old and grayheaded; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my youth unto this day. Here I am: witness against me before Jehovah, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I taken a ransom to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you."

The people immediately responded that all that he said was true, and that he had lived a straightforward and pure life in their presence. Samuel, however, was not satisfied. He rehearsed in their presence their history and the remarkable way in which God had led them and so brought home to them their need of God and their failure in trusting God that they confessed their thanklessness and their sins and asked Samuel to pray for them. These closing words are full of sympathy and tenderness: "Fear not: ye have indeed done all this evil; yet turn not aside from following Jehovah, but serve Jehovah with all your heart: and turn ye not aside; for then would ye go after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain. For Jehovah will not forsake his people for his great name's sake, because it hath pleased Jehovah to make you a people unto himself." It would seem as if Samuel's life had no dark spots in it and that he lived a sincere and constant life before the people and before God all the years of his life from childhood to old age.

THE CHARACTER OF SAMUEL

Samuel in laying down the office of judge and turning the government over to Saul reserved one right for himself. He said, "Far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you." He would still continue to be a priest and prophet. He would give up political and government affairs, but he would still continue to teach and to pray. In reading the life of Samuel one feels that above everything else he was a man of prayer. He began his life in the tabernacle and never lost the sense of the presence of God during all his useful life. After he had led the people to victory over the Philistines and reëstablished the honor of the nation he celebrated the victory at Mizpah, taking a stone and calling it Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto hath Jehovah helped us." The best thing Samuel did for his people was to pray for them, and the last thing that he promised them was that he would not cease to pray for them as long as he lived.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Why is Samuel called both judge and prophet?
2. What led Samuel to give his life to God?
3. How did God call Samuel to his task in life?
4. Why was Samuel reluctant to give the people a king?
5. Whom did Samuel appoint as king and why?
6. After Saul was crowned how did Samuel continue to help the people?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 26. What is the great work of the Church on earth?

A. The great work of the Church on earth is to bear witness to Jesus Christ and so to advance the Kingdom of God.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What relation did Samuel sustain to the Judges?
2. What was Samuel's relation to Saul and to David?
3. What influence did Samuel's mother have upon his life?
4. Did Eli help Samuel to understand his mission in life or did he hinder him from understanding it?
5. Why did the call of God come to Samuel in the tabernacle?
6. Why do we speak of Samuel as the first of the prophets?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 20. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

A. God, having out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.

Lesson VII—DAVID, THE POET-KING

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Surely goodness and lovingkindness shall follow me all the days of my life."—Ps. 23: 6.

TEXT OF LESSON, I Sam. 16: 1-13

For entire lesson, see I Sam., chs. 16 to 31; II Samuel; I Kings 1: 1 to 2: 12

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

1 And Je-ho'vah said unto Sam'u-el, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Is'ra-el? fill thy horn with oil, and go: I will send thee to Jes'se the Beth'le-hem-ite; for I have provided me a king among his sons.

2 And Sam'u-el said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me. And Je-ho'vah said, Take a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to Je-ho'vah.

3 And call Jes'se to the sacrifice, and I will show thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.

4 And Sam'u-el did that which Je-ho'vah spake, and came to Beth'le-hem. And the elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, Comest thou peaceably?

5 And he said, Peaceably; I am come to sacrifice unto Je-ho'vah: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jes'se and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

6 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on E-li'ab, and said, Surely Je-ho'vah's anointed is before him.

7 But Je-ho'vah said unto Sam'u-el, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him: for *Je-ho'vah seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Je-ho'vah looketh on the heart.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

1 And the LORD said unto Sam'u-el, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Is'ra-el? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jes'se the Beth'-le-hem-ite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

2 And Sam'u-el said, How can I go? if Saul hear *it*, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take an heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the LORD.

3 And call Jes'se to the sacrifice, and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me *him* whom I name unto thee.

4 And Sam'u-el did that which the LORD spake, and came to Beth'le-hem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably?

5 And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD: sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jes'se and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

6 ¶ And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on E-li'ab, and said, Surely the LORD'S anointed *is* before him.

7 But the LORD said unto Sam'u-el, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the Lord seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

8 Then Jes'se called A-bin'a-dab, and made him pass before Sam'u-el. And he said, Neither hath Je-ho'vah chosen this.

9 Then Jes'se made Sham'mah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath Je-ho'vah chosen this.

10 And Jes'se made seven of his sons to pass before Sam'u-el. And Sam'u-el said unto Jes'se, Je-ho'vah hath not chosen these.

11 And Sam'uel said unto Jes'se, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he is keeping the sheep. And Sam'u-el said unto Jes'se, Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon. And Je-ho'vah said, Arise, anoint him; for this is he.

13 Then Sam'u-el took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of Je-ho'vah came mightily upon Da'vid from that day forward. So Sam'u-el rose up, and went to Ra'mah.

8 Then Jes'se called A-bin'a-dab, and made him pass before Sam'u-el. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

9 Then Jes'se made Sham'mah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

10 Again, Jes'se made seven of his sons to pass before Sam'u-el. And Sam'u-el said unto Jes'se, The LORD hath not chosen these.

11 And Sam'u-el said unto Jes'se, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Sam'u-el said unto Jes'se, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he *was* ruddy, *and* withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this *is* he.

13 Then Sam'u-el took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon Da'vid from that day forward. So Sam'u-el rose up, and went to Ra'mah.

The Time—About 1041-971 B.C. **The Place**—Palestine.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, May 7	David Before Saul	I Sam. 16 : 19-23.
Tuesday, May 8	David and Goliath	I Sam. 17 : 45-51.
Wednesday, May 9	David and Jonathan	I Sam. 20 : 35-42.
Thursday, May 10	David Before Jehovah	Ps. 51 : 1-13.
Friday, May 11	David, the Poet	Psalms 8, 23.
Saturday, May 12	David, the King	II Sam. 7 : 18-26.
Sunday, May 13	The Blessed Life	Psalm 1.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

1. Mourn for Saul. Samuel loved Saul. Saul's failure broke his heart. **Jesse the Beth-lehemite.** The father of David. Bethlehem was the home of Ruth.

5. Sanctify yourselves. Prepare for worship by means of cleansing with water and fasting. See Ex. 19: 10-14.

7. Jehovah seeth. In italics because not found in the original Hebrew. The words are in the Greek translation. God searches the heart.

12. He was ruddy. Spoken also of Esau. Doubtless referring to the color of the skin or perhaps to the hair.

THE BOY DAVID

We know a good deal about the early life and family of David. Nothing is said about his mother, but we are told that his father's name was Jesse and that he was the youngest of eight sons. He lived on a farm in Bethlehem. It is wonderful how many scenes of the Bible belong to the old town of Bethlehem. There Benjamin was born and there Rachel was buried. It was at Bethlehem that Ruth gleaned in the field. Ruth was the great-grandmother of David, and perhaps David lived and grew up on the same fields where Ruth gleaned the grain in the harvest field of Boaz.

We are told that David was a shepherd and lived a simple outdoor life, watching the sheep, guiding them to the right pastures, and shielding them from the attacks of the wild beasts. We are accustomed to ascribe to David the Twenty-third Psalm, which reflects the life of the shepherd. David's early life was characterized by two qualities. In the first place he was strong and muscular. When he appeared before Saul, and offered to attack the giant Goliath Saul thought he was too young and inexperienced, but David said, "Thy servant was keeping his father's sheep; and when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant smote both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God." The account of David says that he was of a ruddy countenance and no doubt his life in the open air made him the picture of health. The second thing that characterized David was his musical talent. He played wonderfully upon the harp and we often see pictures of him with his hand upon the strings of the harp. Many of the psalms which have come down to us were composed by David who sang them, perhaps, to

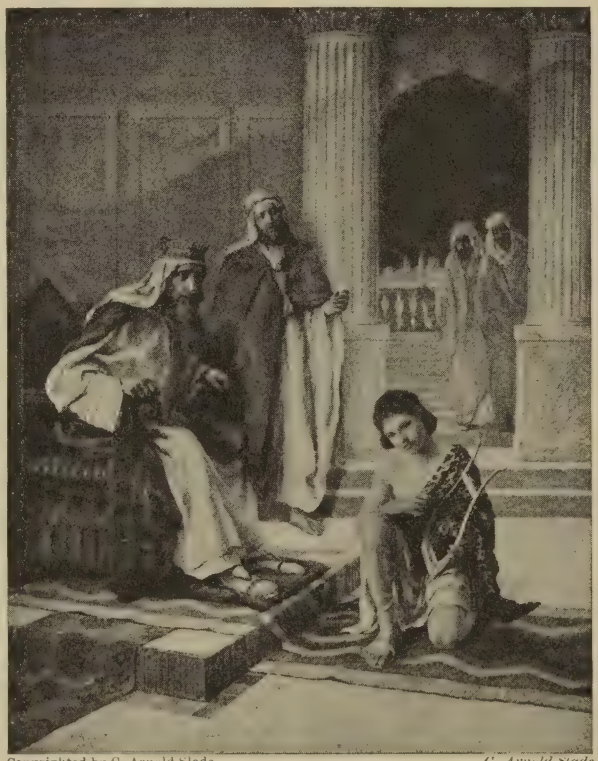
music of his own making. Both of these qualities of muscular and musical ability led finally to his being called to the court of Saul.

Saul had been chosen by Samuel, and had been acclaimed king by the people. No one ever began his career in life with more promise than he did, but gradually he slipped from his high place and became one of the worst failures known to history. He had a bad temper which bordered at times on insanity. He became moody, jealous, and despondent, and the only thing that seemed to quiet him and arouse him from his morbid mood was music. The reputation of David had somehow or other come to the ears of the servants of Saul, and they sent for him to play before the king. David's music acted like medicine and under his influence the king's spirits rose and he became normal and natural again. The result was that Saul took a liking to David and gave him a place in his court.

THE CALL OF GOD

The story of David's call to become king is told in the sixteenth chapter of the First Book of Samuel, and forms part of the lesson printed in the Quarterly. Samuel had mourned for Saul, hoping perhaps that sooner or later he would return to his place of power with the people and favor with God. The word of God, however, came to him, saying, "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? fill thy horn with oil, and go: I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite; for I have provided me a king among his sons."

Samuel seemed to be fearful lest Saul should find out his errand, and so he took with him sacrifices and went forth on his secret mission. He came to the home of Jesse, and called him and his family to sacrifice. He looked upon the seven sons of Jesse, beginning with Eliab, the eldest. One by one as they passed in turn before him they were rejected. Some inner voice from God told Samuel that none of these seven was the chosen king. Samuel was perplexed, for these were all who were present at the sacrifice. He asked, "Are here all thy children?" and Jesse said, "There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he is keeping the sheep." Samuel said, "Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he come hither." There is given a little portrait sketch of the young man. "He was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon." David was brought in, and immediately the voice of the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he." And so Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed David among his brethren. The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day.



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DAVID BEFORE SAUL

THE CALL OF THE PEOPLE

We are not told how long it was after David's anointing, or how long after his playing of the harp in the presence of Saul, that he became the popular idol of the people. We are told, however, in the seventeenth chapter of I Samuel how his popularity became established. Saul was at war with the Philistines. The Israelites were on one mountain and the Philistines on the opposite mountain, and there was a valley between them. The Philistines had a great champion called Goliath of Gath, and every day he stood forth and challenged the army of Israel. His challenge was this: "Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us."

There was no one in the armies of Israel who

dared to meet the giant. One day, however, David was sent by his father with supplies for his brothers who were serving in the army of Saul. While he was in the camp he saw the giant and heard his defiant words. He was ashamed that no one stood forth to meet the challenge and immediately offered to fight the giant. His brothers were indignant, but his words came to the ears of Saul, and he was brought before the king. Saul wished to dress David up in his armor, but David found himself unable to wear it. Like a shepherd he "took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in his wallet; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine." David was successful, as every boy and girl knows, and when he had killed the giant and cut off his head the enemy fled and David became a popular hero.

The story of David's love for Jonathan and Jonathan's love for David is one of the most wonderful stories of friendship that was ever written. We read that "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul"! That is a wonderful thing to say. David had been received into the court of Saul, and had become so intimate there that the daughter of Saul, Michal, had been given to him in marriage, but it was Jonathan who captured David's soul. When Saul, his love turned to jealous hatred, sought to slay David, Jonathan befriended him, and at last saved his life. Saul knew of the love which Jonathan had for David and told him that it would be his undoing. David stood in the way of Jonathan's advancement. Jonathan and David made a covenant, notwithstanding this, and Jonathan "caused David to swear again, for the love that he had to him; for he loved him as he loved his own soul." It was a friendship in which David had everything to gain and in which Jonathan had everything to lose save friendship itself, but they remained true friends to the last. When Jonathan was killed in battle David mourned him and spoke over him words that live unto this day:

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me:
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women."

WAITING GOD'S TIME

When David knew that Saul was determined to put him to death, he followed the advice of Jonathan and fled. For a number of years he lived a wandering life with a band of armed men. He might be called in our day an outlaw, for with six hundred men gathered from all parts of the land he defied authority and lived upon the people of the country and made war. Saul's character was greatly weakened and his rule over the people was becoming less strong, until at last on the mountains of Gilboa, Saul's armies were defeated by the Philistines and both Saul and Jonathan died there. Again and again David had had the opportunity to take Saul's life. He had been near enough once to cut off a part of his robe, but knowing that Saul was God's anointed he was willing to wait God's time and do nothing against the life of the king.

THE KING OF ISRAEL

When Saul died David took up his residence in Hebron and there he was crowned king over Judah. The people naturally turned to David as their leader, but there was still power in the hands of Saul's family. East of the Jordan, at Mahanaim, Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, was king over Israel and for some time the two rival kings carried on a continuous warfare. Abner was the general who led the armies of Ishbosheth, and David received Abner at his court at Hebron and made an agreement with him. It seemed as if a peaceable union would be arranged in the nation when Joab, the leader of David's armies, in a spirit of revenge contrived to murder Abner at the gate of Hebron. This involved David in misunderstanding and to show that he had nothing to do with the murder he fasted and wept over Abner's grave. The removal of Abner, however, opened the way for David to become king over the whole country. We read that Ishbosheth, when he heard that Abner was dead, became feeble and "all the Israelites were troubled." All the tribes of Israel came "unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was thou that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and Jehovah said to thee, Thou shalt be shepherd of my people Israel, and thou shalt be prince over Israel. So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a covenant with them in Hebron before Jehovah: and they anointed David king over Israel."

David had reigned over Judah seven years. When he was crowned king over all Israel he changed his capital to Jerusalem which henceforth became the holy city of Israel. There he reigned over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years. David's reign brought in the Golden Age for Israel. During his reign the kingdom was united and strong, and the surrounding nations were made to respect and honor the people of God. In all this David was dependent upon Jehovah. He purposed in his heart to build a temple in Jerusalem, and made elaborate plans for its construction. When the Lord forbade his carrying out his purpose he commanded his son Solomon to carry out these plans.

DAVID TRIED AND TEMPTED

David's life was not so consistent as the life of Samuel. There were high mountains and deep valleys in it. He was a great saint but he was also a great sinner. During his wars, when he was an

outlaw, he was at times cruel and revengeful, but the one great sin of his life was his treatment of the husband of Bathsheba, Uriah. In order to obtain her as his wife he caused the death of her husband Uriah by sending him into the battle, and by putting him where he was sure to meet with death. The story of David's sin is a dark spot in his character, and he was brought face to face with his wrongdoing by Nathan, the prophet of God, who charged him with his sin, and who brought to him God's message of condemnation. The redeeming thing about David was that though his sin was great his confession was also great. When he knew that he had done wrong he not only suffered for it, but openly confessed it, and again and again in the psalms we hear the refrain of his confession. David's life was full of great honor and success, but it was also at times a very unhappy life. He was not happy in his children. That might be expected because of the fact that those were days when polygamy was practiced and when home life such as we have in Christian lands was impossible. The rebellion of his son Absalom very nearly broke his heart.

THE SWEET SINGER OF ISRAEL

It has been suggested in the lesson that David was not only a king and great general, but also a musician and poet. The beautiful words which David spoke over Saul and Jonathan show that he had the heart and spirit of a great poet. He is best remembered, however, in the psalms. Scholars are not all agreed as to how many of the psalms belong to David, but so many of them belong to him that we usually speak of the whole book of The Psalms as the psalms of David. By the titles seventy-three psalms are assigned to David and in these psalms we discover the inner secret of David's life. If he was a great sinner he was a great penitent and became at last a great saint.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What was the relation of David to Samuel?
2. Why did David incur the anger of Saul?
3. Why did Jonathan fall in love with David?
4. Where did David make his capital?
5. What was David's greatest work?
6. What did David do for the nation and for the religion of his people?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 27. What is meant by the Kingdom of God?

A. By the Kingdom of God is meant the rule of God in the hearts of men, so that in love to him and to their fellow men, they live in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. What led to Saul's overthrow and defeat?
2. Why did David flee from Saul?
3. What traits in David do you admire most?
4. Why do we call David both a great sinner and a great saint?
5. What benefits did David confer upon his nation?
6. What plans did David make for the Temple?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 21. Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?

A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, forever.

Lesson VIII—ELIJAH, THE BRAVE REFORMER

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."—Josh. 24: 15.

TEXT OF LESSON, I Kings 18: 30-39

For entire lesson, see I Kings, chs. 17 to 19; 21; II Kings 1: 1 to 2: 12

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

30 And E-li'jah said unto all the people, Come near unto me; and all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of Je-ho'vah that was thrown down.

31 And E-li'jah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Ja'cob, unto whom the word of Je-ho'vah came, saying, Is'ra-el shall be thy name.

32 And with the stones he built an altar in the name of Je-ho'vah; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

30 And E-li'jah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down.

31 And E-li'jah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Ja'cob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Is'ra-el shall be thy name:

32 And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood. And he said, Fill four jars with water, and pour it on the burnt-offering, and on the wood.

34 And he said, Do it the second time; and they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time; and they did it the third time.

35 And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the *evening* oblation, that E-li'jah the prophet came near, and said, O Je-ho'vah, the God of A'bra-ham, of I'saac, and of Is'ra-el, let it be known this day that thou art God in Is'ra-el, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

37 Hear me, O Je-ho'vah, hear me, that this people may know that thou, Je-ho'vah, art God, and *that* thou hast turned their heart back again.

38 Then the fire of Je-ho'vah fell, and consumed the burnt-offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, Je-ho'vah, he is God; Je-ho'vah, he is God.

33 And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.

34 And he said, Do *it* the second time. And they did *it* the second time. And he said, Do *it* the third time. And they did *it* the third time.

35 And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

36 And it came to pass at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that E-li'jah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of A'bra-ham, I'saac, and Is'ra-el, let it be known this day that thou *art* God in Is'ra-el, and *that* I *am* thy servant, and *that* I have done all these things at thy word.

37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou *art* the LORD God, and *that* thou hast turned their heart back again.

38 Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench.

39 And when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he *is* the God; the LORD, he *is* the God.

The Time—867-849 B.C.

The Place—Israel.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, May 14	Elijah Introduced	I Kings 17 : 1-7.
Tuesday, May 15	Elijah Raises the Widow's Son	I Kings 17 : 17-24.
Wednesday, May 16	Elijah at Mount Carmel	I Kings 18 : 30-39.
Thursday, May 17	Elijah Under the Juniper Tree	I Kings 19 : 1-8.
Friday, May 18	Elijah at Mount Horeb	I Kings 19 : 13-18.
Saturday, May 19	Elijah's Translation	II Kings 2 : 1-11.
Sunday, May 20	Christ Is King	Psalm 2.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

30. Repaired the altar. The sanctuary of Jehovah that had stood there had been destroyed.

32. Two measures. Margin "a two-seah measure." A seah was about two and a half gallons.

38. The fire of Jehovah. The lightning. See Gen. 19: 24. This was God's answer to Elijah's prayer.

39. He is God. The fire which came in answer to prayer decided for Jehovah and against Baal.

ELIJAH THE TISHBITE

Elijah stepped upon the scene of history without any introduction. He is in a sense a man of mystery. He came out of the unknown and disappeared at last in the whirlwind and a chariot of fire. Whenever he appeared it was a surprise, and he disappeared again into obscurity. He was called "Elijah the Tishbite" which does not tell us much about him. His name means "My God is Jehovah." He probably came from Tishbeh, which was situated in Galilee, but he made his home apparently in Gilead, and was acquainted with the country east of the Jordan. He was a man raised up by God at a definite time for a definite purpose.

In the days of David and Solomon the kingdom was united, but after the death of Solomon the nation was divided into two kingdoms, one called Israel, the northern part, and the other Judah, the southern part. Israel was made up of ten tribes and Judah of two, Judah and Benjamin. The Northern Kingdom had become very corrupt and idolatrous. The first king, Jeroboam, had instituted idolatry, and set up calves of gold, one at Bethel and one at Dan. Gradually these places became the scenes of idolatrous worship and Jeroboam was succeeded by kings who allowed the country to drift further and further into heathen practices. Again and again concerning the kings of Israel it is written, "He did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah." No one had been found strong enough to oppose the tendencies of the times until Elijah appeared with the suddenness of a thunderbolt in the midst of the king's court.

AHAB THE KING

When Elijah appeared before the court of the king of Israel he came face to face with Ahab. Ahab was a strong and powerful monarch. He had been brave and successful in battle, and under him the kingdom had grown strong and mighty. We read of him, "And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made the Asherah; and Ahab did yet more to provoke Jehovah, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." He himself was not only sympathetic toward the worship of Baal, but his wife was a pronounced idolater. Queen Jezebel is perhaps the most wicked woman known in history. Lady Macbeth has often been compared to her. She belonged to a heathen country and her purpose was to settle upon Israel the practices of her own land. The worship of Baal was in a sense the worship of the forces of nature and consisted of cruel and wicked practices.

Elijah suddenly appeared in the court of Ahab and Jezebel with his word, "As Jehovah, the God of Israel, liveth." The words of Elijah were both a challenge and a threat, and it was natural that Ahab should resent the coming of the prophet and that he should defy him. Elijah announced to Ahab that there would be no rain, consequently no harvests in the land. Ahab must be taught that God and not Baal was the Lord of nature, and in a stern and terrible way he was to be punished, together with his people, for neglect of God. Elijah, having delivered his message, disappeared as suddenly as he had come.

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ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL

THE PROPHET IN HIDING

When the prophet had delivered his message he hid himself, according to the word of the Lord, on the east side of Jordan by the brook Cherith. Perhaps this region was well-known to Elijah. At any rate it served as a splendid hiding place for him during the progress of the famine. Perhaps at first Ahab was indifferent to the words of the strange prophet, but as there was no rain and no harvests both he and his people must have begun to be resentful toward Elijah and imagine that the prophet of his own will had spoken against the king and the nation. Doubtless search was made for Elijah through all the country, and if he had been found his life would have been taken from him.

Travelers in the neighborhood of Cherith tell us that it is a place which has all the advantages of a retreat. It is difficult to discover and has the advantages of a beautiful and romantic outlook. It was a wonderful place of retreat for a man who loved to be alone and who knew what it was to meditate with God. During the years of his solitude he would think out in prayer his duty and his message. His confidence in God was confirmed by the way in which God took care of him. After Elijah had performed the will of God and spoken his message to the king, God proved his friendship for Elijah by caring for him and feeding him in a remarkable way. We are told that the ravens brought him his food every day and that the water of the brook refreshed him.

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW

How long Elijah remained in hiding we are not distinctly told, but in course of time the brook dried up. Then the Lord said to him, "Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Sidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow there to sustain thee." Zarephath lay on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea and Elijah would have to cross the country to reach it. It lay, however, outside the borders of Israel and there he would be safe from the king's wrath.

When Elijah reached Zarephath he discovered a woman gathering sticks and knew that she was the widow to whom God had sent him. He asked her for water, and when she went to get it he asked for something to eat. She answered, "I have not a

cake, but a handful of meal in the jar, and a little oil in the cruse.'' Nevertheless Elijah bade her make him a little cake. The woman took the last handful of meal and furnished him with food and then she knew that the hand of God was upon this strange man, for they ''did eat many days'' and ''the jar of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail.'' It is a remarkable story and belongs to a remarkable time when God was teaching his people to trust him. It contains, however, a true principle of life, that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and we really receive back again what we give. Jesus spoke about this incident in Luke 4: 25, 26. Elijah not only received comfort, but gave comfort, for when the widow's son died, and was restored by him to life again the mother was won to the faith of Jehovah, the God of Israel.

THE CHALLENGE ON CARMEL

The famine lasted for over three years, and at the end of that time Elijah again appeared before Ahab. He was ready now to deal with the king and the heathen queen. Three years of famine had brought them to a place of helplessness. Their own God had been unable to save them and although they called Baal a nature god they found that he was helpless in the presence of the terrible famine. The time had come for Elijah definitely to challenge the heathen faith and like an apparition he appeared in the court.

He appeared first to Obadiah, a true servant of God, who refused at first to inform the king of the presence of the prophet, fearing that Elijah would disappear, and that he would be punished for giving a false report. When he was assured that Elijah had come to meet Ahab he told the king of the prophet's appearance. It was a very dramatic moment when the king and the prophet met. Ahab exclaimed, ''Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel?'' The answer of Elijah was quiet and confident, ''I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house.'' Elijah was speaking to the conscience of the king and the king knew that the prophet was stronger than he, and had the situation in his own hand. Elijah immediately challenged Ahab to a test. He asked him to take to Mount Carmel the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal and the four hundred prophets of the goddess Asherah, and said he would meet them there and determine whether Jehovah or Baal was God.

On Mount Carmel the lonely prophet faced the prophets of Baal together with the king and the queen, who were on the side of the heathen worshipers. Elijah's challenge was very simple. He challenged the people to decide once and for all whether they would follow Jehovah or Baal. He presented to them a very simple plan by which a decision could be made. They were to prepare two sacrifices, one for Jehovah and one for Baal, and the God who answered with fire would be the true God. The prophets of Baal prepared their sacrifice first, and then they began to call on the name of their god, ''from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered.'' Elijah mocked them, because there was no answer.

Evening came, and still there was none to answer or any that regarded. Then Elijah repaired the old altar of Jehovah that had been thrown down and prepared his sacrifice, and poured water upon the sacrifice so as to assure them that there was no hidden fire. The water ran around the altar and filled the trench. Then Elijah called upon Jehovah. Immediately the fire of God fell like lightning and consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. When the people saw that they fell on their faces, and cried ''Jehovah, he is God; Jehovah, he is God.'' Elijah took the prophets of Baal and slew them. Then he prayed for rain. He bade the king hasten to his palace lest the great rain overtake him and Ahab rode to Jezreel, ''and the hand of Jehovah was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.''

THE STILL SMALL VOICE

Jezebel was indignant that Elijah dared to slay the prophets of Baal and she asserted that she would take Elijah's life in turn. So Elijah fled and did not rest until he came to the wilderness of Beersheba, in the southern part of Judah, and there in the wilderness, under a juniper tree, his faith seemed to fail him and he asked that he might die. He was weary and tired, and felt that he was alone. God treated him in a kindly way. First of all, he let him sleep and then he gave him to eat, and then he let him sleep again, and eat again. ''Elijah went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.'' There in a great revelation Elijah discovered that God was not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice which spoke to him, a voice of gentle stillness. Elijah learned that there is a better way than force and fire and famine; that love is that better way and that God is love. It was a wonderful revelation for Elijah to receive, for it spoke of the spirit of Jesus.

God told Elijah to return to his work and anoint Hazael to be king of Syria, Jehu to be king of Israel, and Elisha to be his own successor.

THE CHARIOT OF FIRE

Elijah's later life is obscure, and less eventful. Once more, however, he appeared suddenly in the presence of Ahab. Ahab had been guilty through the treachery of Jezebel of taking the life of Naboth because of his refusal to let the king have the vineyard which was his own personal inheritance. The murder had been effected by Jezebel, but Ahab was equally guilty. Elijah suddenly appeared before the king. When Ahab saw the prophet, he said, ''Hast thou found me, O mine

enemy?'' and Elijah said, ''I have found thee.'' Elijah pronounced doom upon Ahab and Jezebel. ''Thus saith Jehovah, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood.'' The words of Elijah came literally true, and the sin of Ahab brought forth its fruit in sorrow and death.

The last incident in the life of Elijah is the wonderful way in which God took him from earth to heaven. God had chosen Elisha to be Elijah's successor and Elisha had left his plowing to follow the old prophet. God had revealed to Elijah that his end had come, and he wished to be alone and also to test Elisha, and so from place to place he went, urging Elisha to leave him, but Elisha clung to him. When Elijah asked Elisha what request he would make of him, the young man begged that a double portion—the eldest son's share—of the old prophet's spirit might be upon him. Elijah promised that if Elisha saw him taken from him the request would be granted. Elisha remained to the last, and suddenly there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated them, ''and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.'' The mantle of Elijah fell upon Elisha and the spirit that had filled the old prophet took possession of the young.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. In what religious condition did Elijah find Israel?
2. Why had Israel become an idolatrous country?
3. What do you know about Ahab and Jezebel?
4. How did Elijah prove that Jehovah was the true God?
5. What lessons did Elijah learn from the still small voice?
6. What was the secret of Elijah's greatness?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 28. What is our sure hope concerning the Kingdom of God?

A. Our sure hope concerning the Kingdom of God is that it will increase until it is fully come in all the earth.

Q. 29. What is our Lord's last command concerning the Kingdom of God?

A. Our Lord's last command concerning the Kingdom of God is: ''Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.''—Matt. 28: 19, 20.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. How was Elijah prepared for his great life work?
2. How long did the famine last?
3. What challenge did Elijah make to the worshipers of Baal?
4. Why did Elijah flee from Jezebel after the contest on Mount Carmel?
5. Why did Elijah condemn Ahab for his treatment of Naboth?
6. What lessons do we learn from Elijah's ascension?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 22. How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

A. Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

Lesson IX—ISAIAH, THE STATESMAN-PROPHET

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Here am I; send me."—Isa. 6: 8.

TEXT OF LESSON, Isa. 6: 1-8

For entire lesson, see II Kings 18: 13 to 20: 19; Isa. 1: 1; ch. 6

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

1 In the year that king Uz-zi'ah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple.

2 Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Je-ho'vah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

1 In the year that king Uz-zi'ah died I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory.

4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Je-ho'vah of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven.

8 And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me.

5 ¶ Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King the LORD of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here *am* I; send me.

The Time—About 740-680 B.C. **The Place**—Judah.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, May 21	Isaiah's Call	Isa. 6 : 1-8.
Tuesday, May 22	The Victory Over Sennacherib	II Kings 19 : 32-37.
Wednesday, May 23	Hezekiah's Life Lengthened	II Kings 20 : 1-7.
Thursday, May 24	The Babylonian Captivity Foretold	II Kings 20 : 12-19.
Friday, May 25	Isaiah's Prophecy of Peace	Isa. 11 : 1-9.
Saturday, May 26	Isaiah's Prophecy of the Saviour	Isa. 63 : 1-9.
Sunday, May 27	Isaiah's Vision of Strength	Isa., ch. 12.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

1. The year that king Uzziah died. About 735 B.C. Uzziah died under the judgment of God.

4. Smoke. The symbol of God's displeasure with sin. Rev. 15: 8.

6. Seraphim. Symbolic beings, attendants upon the court of Jehovah. **Live coal.** Margin "hot stone." The fire from the altar of God was conveyed to the heart of Isaiah.

8. Here am I. Characteristic of Isaiah. He immediately obeyed not knowing yet what he was to do.

ISAIAH THE PROPHET

Isaiah has been called the king among prophets. What we know of him we learn largely from his own writings which are full of suggestions concerning himself and his family. For forty years he spoke the message of God to the people of Judah. He prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. We would call him to-day a great preacher, for his words are words of eloquence and passion and power. We would also call him a great statesman for he guided the policies of more than one king and the nation looked to him for guidance and leadership in times of great political crises. He understood not only the policy of his own country, but the political conditions of the surrounding nations. If you will look at some of the chapters in Isaiah, beginning with ch. 13, you will see he speaks a message first to Babylon, then to Moab, then to Damascus, to Egypt, and to Tyre. He was tireless in his willingness to serve God and his own people. We do not know very much about him for he did not come to speak of himself but to speak the word and message of God. He revealed God to the nation, and some one has said that he died with the gospel upon his lips. He prophesied of the Messiah that was to come.

THE EARLY LIFE OF ISAIAH

Dr. Matheson has said that the business of the prophets was to hide themselves behind their message. A prophet, like John the Baptist, was a voice crying in the wilderness. He hid behind his words; he allowed only his voice to be in evidence. Yet we know a little about this great prophet, Isaiah, whose words are so familiar to us after so many centuries. His father's name was Amoz, but we know nothing further of him. We do know, however, that Isaiah was intimately associated with the royal court, and had ready access at all times to the king, so we may conclude that he was of noble family and possessed the advantages of a splendid education and of the highest social contacts. He had the same equipment for his high office that Paul had. His name means "Jehovah hath saved," and he tells us that his very name was a sign to Israel from the Lord of Hosts. He had two sons who bore unusual names. The name of the eldest was Shear-jashub, which means, "a remnant shall return." Isaiah preached what has often been called "the gospel of the remnant," that is, the belief that a few people in the country that had been loyal to God would at last bring about the salvation of the whole nation. The second boy's name was still more peculiar. The name given to him was Maher-shalal-hash-baz which means "spoil speedeth, prey hasteneth" and these words were written on a large stone tablet as a sign that "before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and, My mother, the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be carried away before the king of Assyria." Isaiah meant

by this that before the lad had grown up the power of Assyria would be humbled. During his long life and service Isaiah lived in his own home and carried on his great work for God, unhindered and unafraid.

HIS PLACE IN HISTORY

Isaiah belonged to Jerusalem, and there he uttered his prophecies. His ministry began about the year 740 B.C., and lasted until probably 680 B.C. That was an important period of history not only to Israel, but to the world. High-school students will remember that according to tradition, the city of Rome was founded in the year 753 B.C. The Northern Kingdom, Israel, was ruled over by weak kings and in Isaiah's day was destined to fall before Assyria. Judah still remained loyal to the worship of Jehovah, but was in danger of being destroyed through political entanglements. Judah lay between two great world powers which were bound sooner or later to find themselves at war. These two powers were Assyria and Egypt and it was Isaiah's policy to remain neutral and loyal to God and refrain from being mixed up with the policies either of Assyria or of Egypt. Isaiah's greatest work was to keep Judah from allying herself with Egypt.

THE CALL OF THE PROPHET

The verses printed in the Quarterly give us an understanding of the prophet's early life. They contain Isaiah's call to the prophetic office. We are told the circumstances under which the call came to him. It was the year that the great king Uzziah died. Isaiah was a young man deeply interested in the condition and fate of his country. The king had been struck with leprosy fifteen years before and his son Jotham had reigned as his regent. Now, at the time of Uzziah's death, Isaiah, a young man, went up to worship in the Temple. Doubtless the ordinary worship was in progress but for this young man everything that day was different. He saw God upon a throne and heard the song of the seraphim as they sang, "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." The Temple shook and the house was filled with smoke. Isaiah was fearful and penitent and cried out to God for forgiveness and cleansing. Perhaps he had thought in his heart he was fitted to do something for his nation, and God showed him something first had to be done for himself. When he was cleansed and purified by the presence of God's Holy Spirit the call came to him clear and plain, "Who will go for us?" and Isaiah immediately responded, "Here am I; send me." It is one of the most interesting and instructive passages in the Bible. First of all, the young man saw a vision of God, and then he saw a vision of himself, and then a vision of service. This is the order in which the divine call must come to all of us.

THE CALL TO SERVICE

After responding to the call of God, Isaiah received his commission to go out among the people and proclaim the divine message to them. We know now what that message was. If you will take the Book of Isaiah and read the first chapter, which was perhaps one of the sermons Isaiah preached, you will gain an idea of Isaiah's message and method. Two great ideas run through this remarkable passage. There is the threat of judgment and there is also the promise of mercy. The last words concerning forgiveness and pardon give us the reason why Isaiah is spoken of as dying with the gospel upon his lips. If you will now turn and read the story contained in the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh chapters of Isaiah you will be introduced to one of the most interesting stories in history. The great king of Assyria, Sennacherib, having conquered and destroyed the Northern Kingdom, brought his forces into Judah and laid siege to Jerusalem. King Hezekiah rent his clothes and the people were on the verge of surrendering the city when Isaiah stood forth and, telling the king to trust in Jehovah, pronounced judgment upon the king of Assyria. Everything looked as if the city would be destroyed but that night "the angel of Jehovah went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies." It was in this way that Isaiah served his nation and led the people back to trust in God.

THE MESSAGE OF ISAIAH

The passages which we have been studying suggest to us the nature of Isaiah's message. There is one message, however, which dominated all the teaching of Isaiah. While he spoke strong, harsh words concerning the judgment and punishment of sin he was always a prophet of mercy and of hope. He spoke of the time when sorrow would be no more and even in our day we continue to quote his wonderful words. War was the pest of the nations and every nation was armed to the teeth. Yet Isaiah saw the coming of a time when war would be no more. "And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This was because Isaiah saw the coming of a time when a new King would reign over Israel. This King is the Messiah. It was of him Isaiah was speaking when he said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his king-

dom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this.'' In this same Book of Isaiah we have the wonderful words which are familiar to all of us. ''He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.'' There is a little book called, ''Christ in Isaiah,'' and from the passages from which we have just quoted it is easy to see what the author means. Isaiah knew that the only salvation of God to his people must come through the Messiah, Mighty God, Prince of Peace.

THE CHARACTER OF ISAIAH

We are not told anything about the last days of Isaiah. Other prophets were speaking their messages at the same time as he, messages which were mainly of despair. Isaiah spoke his message of hope, love, and life, and then passed out into obscurity and silence. There is a tradition among the Jews to the effect that by the order of the cruel Manasseh, Isaiah was inclosed in a hollow tree and then sawed asunder. Many think he is referred to in the book of Hebrews where in the eleventh chapter these words are found, ''They were stoned, they were sawed asunder.'' It may be that Isaiah perished in the massacres ordered by Manasseh and so met a martyr's cruel death. It has been said of him: ''In the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, he stood as an incarnate conscience, testifying for God and for his covenant of eternal truth. What he endured in carrying on his prolonged battle with every form of evil, cannot be adequately imagined. He was a polished and high-bred gentleman, versed in various learning, and familiar with the affairs of state. He was a man of keen susceptibilities, quick to feel a wrong, or to suffer under neglect, ridicule, and reproach. But he never quailed under opposition, nor wavered in persecution.''

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. When did Isaiah live and prophesy?
2. Why is he called the king among the prophets?
3. What is known of his life and family?
4. How was he called to his prophetic work?
5. What was Isaiah's message to the nation?
6. How did Isaiah speak of the coming Messiah?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 30. What are the special hindrances to our Christian life?

A. The special hindrances to our Christian life are temptations to sin which beset us from within and from without and against which we should always watch and pray.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Under what kings did Isaiah live and work?
2. What do we know of Isaiah's early life and circumstances?
3. Under what conditions was he called to his life work?
4. What prophecies did he utter concerning the coming Messiah?
5. What was his advice in national affairs?
6. To what call of God may we say, ''Here am I; send me''?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 23. What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?

A. Christ, as our Redeemer, executeth the offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation.

Lesson X—JEREMIAH, THE PROPHET OF COURAGE

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."—I Cor. 16: 13.

TEXT OF LESSON, Jer. 35: 5-14, 18, 19

For entire lesson, see Jer. 1: 1-10; 7: 1-15; 20: 1-6; chs. 21; 26; 32; 35; 36; 37: 11-21; 39: 11, 12; 42: 1-11; 43: 4-10

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

5 And I set before the sons of the house of the Re'chab-ites bowls full of wine, and cups; and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.

6 But they said, We will drink no wine; for Jon'a-dab the son of Re'chab, our father, com-

AUTHORIZED VERSION

5 And I set before the sons of the house of the Re'chab-ites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.

6 But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jon'a-dab the son of Re'chab our father com-

manded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons, for ever:

7 Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any; but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land wherein ye sojourn.

8 And we have obeyed the voice of Jon'a-dab the son of Re'chab, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters;

9 Nor to build houses for us to dwell in; neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

10 But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jon'a-dab our father commanded us.

11 But it came to pass, when Neb-u-chad-rez'zar king of Bab'y-lon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Je-ru'sa-lem for fear of the army of the Chal-de'ans, and for fear of the army of the Syr'i-ans; so we dwell at Je-ru'sa-lem.

12 Then came the word of Je-ho'vah unto Jer-e-mi'ah, saying,

13 Thus saith Je-ho'vah of hosts, the God of Is'ra-el: Go, and say to the men of Ju'dah and the inhabitants of Je-ru'sa-lem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith Je-ho'vah.

14 The words of Jon'a-dab the son of Re'chab, that he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed; and unto this day they drink none, for they obey their father's commandment. But I have spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking; and ye have not hearkened unto me.

* * * * *

18 And Jer-e-mi'ah said unto the house of the Re'chab-ites, Thus saith Je-ho'vah of hosts, the God of Is'ra-el: Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jon'a-dab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he commanded you;

19 Therefore thus saith Je-ho'vah of hosts, the God of Is'ra-el: Jon'a-dab the son of Re'chab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

manded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, *neither* ye, nor your sons for ever:

7 Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have *any:* but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye *be* strangers.

8 Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jon'a-dab the son of Re'chab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters;

9 Nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

10 But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jon'a-dab our father commanded us.

11 But it came to pass, when Neb-u-chad-rez'zar king of Bab'y-lon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Je-ru'sa-lem for fear of the army of the Chal-de'ans, and for fear of the army of the Syr'i-ans: so we dwell at Je-ru'sa-lem.

12 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jer-e-mi'ah, saying,

13 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Is'ra-el; Go and tell the men of Ju'dah and the inhabitants of Je-ru'sa-lem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the LORD.

14 The words of Jon'a-dab the son of Re'chab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me.

* * * * *

18 ¶ And Jer-e-mi'ah said unto the house of the Re'chab-ites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Is'ra-el; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jon'a-dab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you:

19 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Is'ra-el; Jon'a-dab the son of Re'chab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

The Time—About 627-586 B.C. **The Places**—Judah, Egypt.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, May 28	The Call of Jeremiah	Jer. 1 : 5-10.
Tuesday, May 29	Jeremiah Preaching Repentance	Jer. 7 : 1-7.
Wednesday, May 30	Jeremiah's Faithfulness	Jer. 26 : 10-15.
Thursday, May 31	The Story of the Rechabites	Jer. 35 : 5-14.
Friday, June 1	Jeremiah Praying for His People	Jer. 42 : 4-12.
Saturday, June 2	Jeremiah in Egypt	Jer. 43 : 4-10.
Sunday, June 3	God, the Defender of the Afflicted	Ps. 94 : 16-23.

DIFFICULT WORDS AND PHRASES

5. Rechabites. A wandering or nomadic tribe connected with Moses' father-in-law. Judg. 1: 16.

6. Jonadab. He assisted Jehu in overthrowing Baal worship. He commanded abstinence from strong drink and his descendants were faithful to his command. II Kings 10: 15-28.

13. Go, and say. Jeremiah was to apply the lesson of loyal obedience, taught by the Rechabites, to the people of Israel.

19. To stand before me. As a reward for their temperate and good living. Jeremiah promised lasting prosperity for them.

JEREMIAH AND HIS TIMES

Jeremiah lived and prophesied during one of the

most eventful periods in the history of Judah. His public life began in the thirteenth year of the reign of King Josiah, which would be 627 B.C., and he continued until the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., a period of about forty years of public service. You will remember that in the reign of Josiah great reforms were planned and carried out by the young king and the book of the law was discovered in the Temple. We are not told what part Jeremiah had in these reforms, but it is interesting to know that both Jeremiah and Josiah were young men and that they tried to put the nation right with God. The tragic death of the young king Josiah brought disaster to the nation. He was killed in the battle of Megiddo, 609 B.C., when the army of Judah fought against the Egyptians. This battle gave Egypt supremacy and made Judah dependent upon the power of Egypt. Josiah was succeeded by Jehoahaz, who after a reign of only three months was taken captive into Egypt. Judah was made a vassal state. Jehoahaz was succeeded by Jehoiakim, who undid all the reforms of Josiah, and idolatry, intemperance, and worldliness were introduced into the nation. It was against these iniquities that Jeremiah spoke. He stood alone in his position about the national policy, and announced that God would certainly punish and destroy the nation unless it repented. The last king of Judah was Zedekiah, whose eyes were put out when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem in 586 B.C. During all this dark period of Hebrew history Jeremiah stood alone and prophesied the doom of his people.

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JEREMIAH

THE CALL OF JEREMIAH

We do not know much about Jeremiah's life and ancestry. He was born in a little village called Anathoth, which was about three miles from Jerusalem. His father was Hilkiah, a priest. The call of Jeremiah took place suddenly in the thirteenth year of Josiah. The word of the Lord came unto him, saying, "I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations." Jeremiah, like Moses, was reluctant to answer the call. "Ah, Lord Jehovah! behold, I know not how to speak; for I am a child." Then the word of the Lord came again: "Say not, I am a child; for to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go, and whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid because of them; for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith Jehovah. Then Jehovah put forth his hand, and touched my mouth; and Jehovah said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth: see, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant." We have seen in so many of these lessons how God called men suddenly to important work, and it is true that God calls people today.

THE MESSAGE OF JEREMIAH

The message of Jeremiah was one of the strangest that was ever given to a prophet to tell to his nation. There were other prophets who were speaking words of peace and prosperity, but Jeremiah was called upon to speak words of disaster, defeat, and overthrow for his nation. Judah lay between the nations, and after the power of Assyria was broken in the time of Isaiah, Egypt became strong and overcame Judah in the time of Josiah. Later, however, in 605 B.C., at the great battle of Carchemish, Babylon overthrew Egypt and under Nebuchadnezzar brought Jerusalem under the power of Babylon and took many of the people of Judah and Jerusalem into exile. This is called the Babylonian Exile. It was this disaster concerning which Jeremiah prophesied. He said all those who were prophesying peace were wrong. He spoke only the word of God and his message was that the enemy, which was Babylon, was sure to come, and that sooner or later Judah must be brought into captivity by Babylon because of the iniquity and sin of the people. It was a strange message to deliver. No one likes to prophesy defeat and overthrow. True patriotism, however, sometimes calls upon those who would be prophets to speak words of warning and words of truth. Dante spoke similar words to the people of Florence in regard to France. Jeremiah did not say "My country, right or wrong." He was willing to stand alone and proclaim that if his country was wrong it would suffer punishment.

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

Because of his discouraging and damaging prophecies Jeremiah was silenced. He was commanded not to speak and ordered on penalty of his life to keep from uttering his hopeless messages. There was one thing, however, which he could do. He could write. If one cannot speak or is put in a position where he is unable to tell his messages to the people he can write them. This has often been done, and sometimes the servants of the Lord have done more through their writing than through their speaking. Paul was denied his liberty of speech and was made a prisoner in Rome, and from that prison he sent some of his most wonderful letters which speak to us centuries after his voice has been silenced. John Bunyan was commanded not to speak or preach in the days of the Puritan persecutions and because he would not be silenced he was put in prison in Bedford jail. Since he could not preach he began to write and there he wrote his wonderful book "The Pilgrim's Progress" which millions in all parts of the world have read and are still reading. It was because Jeremiah was silenced that he began to write and because he wrote we have to-day the words which he both spoke and wrote. He wrote the words containing his message and ordered Baruch, his servant, to read them to the people. The manuscript of Jeremiah was taken to the king who was sitting in his winter chambers. The king was not at all disturbed by the warning of the prophet and in an arrogant way took his penknife, and as portions of the manuscript were read, he cut pieces off with his penknife and cast them into the fire that was burning near him. He continued this until all the message which Jeremiah had written was destroyed. When Jeremiah heard what had been done he did not waste any time, but began again to rewrite what had been written and he had other messages, so that all the king's foolhardy treatment of the message went for nothing. The message still lived and did its work. In the same way the Bible as a whole has been treated. It has been burned and banished and destroyed. It has been attacked by enemies and those who wished to undermine its influence but it still lives and will live. It cannot be destroyed.

JEREMIAH IN PRISON

Jeremiah continued his prophecies, saying that the fall of Jerusalem was inevitable. Nebuchadnezzar the king would surely come and Jerusalem would be destroyed. Jeremiah was one of the most lonely of men, but he was loyal to his message and refused to alter it for his own comfort or advantage. He saw the coming of Nebuchadnezzar; he prophesied the destruction of Egypt and the coming of the power of Babylon over the land of the Euphrates. As the time drew near Jeremiah told the people they would perish by the sword, by famine, or by pestilence, and that he who went forth to the Chaldees should live. "Thus saith Jehovah, This city shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it." The people turned upon Jeremiah, and King Zedekiah, who tried to befriend him, was powerless. They took the prophet and cast him into the dungeon of Malchijah. They let him down by cords into a pit where there was no water, and Jeremiah sank into the mire. An Ethiopian by the name of Ebed-melech planned his escape, and the king, who was convinced of Jeremiah's sincerity, asked for a private interview, and asked him to tell him the whole truth. Jeremiah repeated what he had so often said, that Jerusalem was doomed. "If thou wilt go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thy house. But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand."

A PROPHET OF HOPE

If anyone thinks, however, that Jeremiah was a dark, black pessimist he is mistaken. One is not a pessimist who speaks the truth. He was a prophet of hope. He believed that after the Babylonian Captivity there would come a new day and a new life to the nation. To prove that he had faith in his country and in the return of his people from exile he did something which showed clearly his own faith. He invested in land in his own town of Anathoth. He bought the field, weighed out the money, subscribing the deed, sealing it, and calling witnesses, and said to his servant Baruch: "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, this deed of the purchase which is sealed, and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel; that they may continue many days. For thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land." It was an example of supreme faith. Jeremiah knew of the coming national overthrow, and was still willing to invest in land, sure that it would be restored to his people again. He held firmly to the faith that the people of God would not be destroyed. Jerusalem might be destroyed, but the word of God concerning his people would live.

THE NEW COVENANT

It was this faith which gave Jeremiah his great message. He saw clearly that faith in God was not dependent upon the security of Jerusalem. Now that the time had come, Jeremiah said that the city would be taken, but that faith and religion and trust in God did not depend upon the security of walls and gates and armies. Religion was something better than faith in stone, brick, and iron.

Part of the lesson of the Exile was to show the people that religion was something different from patriotism and that faith in God was not dependent upon national security. It was because of this that Jeremiah discovered the truth that true religion belonged not to the nation but to the individual heart. God would make a new covenant with his people which would speak not so much of national prosperity, but of individual salvation and security. This covenant was fulfilled in Jesus.

THE DEATH OF JEREMIAH

Everything Jeremiah prophesied came true. In 586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar came with his armies before Jerusalem, and it fell before him. King Zedekiah was taken prisoner and his eyes put out. The nobles and the priests and the best of the people were carried off into exile. Those who were not captured escaped into Egypt and Jeremiah, whose prophecies and work were known to Nebuchednezzar, was given the choice of determining his own fate. Jeremiah chose to remain in the homeland but the Jews who fled to Egypt compelled him to accompany them. It is interesting to see how the Bible draws a veil over the latter end of the prophets. Their end is never important. They are voices crying in the wilderness saying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Jeremiah, having concluded his mission and delivered his message, passed off the scene. His message was, altogether, very simple. He proclaimed that no one could give any half-hearted allegiance to God and survive, and that God alone was worthy to receive honor and glory and dominion and power.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What relation did Jeremiah have to Nebuchadnezzar?
2. Under what kings did Jeremiah prophesy?
3. Why was Jeremiah put in prison?
4. What do you admire most in Jeremiah?
5. Why did the people of his day think Jesus was Jeremiah?
6. Where did Jeremiah end his life?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 31. What special helps has God appointed for us in our Christian life?

A. The special helps which God has appointed for us in our Christian life are the Bible, the sacraments, prayer, and fellowship in the Church.

Q. 32. How should we use the Bible?

A. We should use the Bible with reverence, read it daily, treasure it in our hearts and obey it in our lives.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. How was Jeremiah prepared for his life work?
2. What was his response to God's call?
3. Why did he find his work so difficult?
4. Was Jeremiah a pessimist?
5. What did he mean by the new covenant?
6. Was Jeremiah a true patriot?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 24. How doth Christ execute the office of a prophet?

A. Christ executeth the office of a prophet, in revealing to us, by his Word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

Lesson XI—NEHEMIAH, THE BOLD BUILDER

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord."—Neh. 4: 14.

TEXT OF LESSON, Neh. 4: 6-15

For entire lesson, see Neh., chs. 1; 2; 4 to 6; 8: 9-12; 12: 31 to 13: 31

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

6 So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto half *the height* thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

7 But it came to pass that, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem went forward, *and* that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth;

8 And they conspired all of them together to come and fight against Jerusalem, and to cause confusion therein.

9 But we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

10 And Judah said, The strength of the bearers

AUTHORIZED VERSION

6 So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

7 ¶ But it came to pass, *that* when San-bal'lat, and To-bi'ah, and the A-ra'bi-ans, and the Am'monites, and the Ash'dod-ites, heard that the walls of Je-ru'sa-lem were made up, *and* that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth,

8 And conspired all of them together to come *and* to fight against Je-ru'sa-lem, and to hinder it.

9 Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

10 And Ju'dah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and *there is* much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

11 And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come into the midst of them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.

12 And it came to pass that, when the Jews that dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times from all places, Ye must return unto us.

13 Therefore set I in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in the open places, I set *there* the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, who is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

15 And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

11 And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.

12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, From all places whence ye shall return unto us *they will be upon you.*

13 ¶ Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, *and* on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, *which is* great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

15 And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

The Time—About 445-433 B.C. **The Places**—Persia, Judah.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, June 4	Nehemiah's Prayer	Neh. 1: 5-11.
Tuesday, June 5	Nehemiah Before the King	Neh. 2: 1-8.
Wednesday, June 6	A Man Who Was Not Afraid	Neh. 4: 6-15.
Thursday, June 7	Nehemiah Rebuking Extortioners	Neh. 5: 6-13.
Friday, June 8	Nehemiah, the Comforter	Neh. 8: 9-12.
Saturday, June 9	Nehemiah, the Reformer	Neh. 13: 10-19.
Sunday, June 10	God Our Refuge and Strength	Ps. 46: 1-7.

PERSONS AND PLACES

7. Sanballat. A Samaritan. The leader of the opposition against Nehemiah. **Tobiah.** Called a "servant." He was an Ammonite. **Arabians . . . Ammonites . . . Ashdodites.** These formed an enemy circle around Jerusalem, jealous of her possible return to power.

8. Jerusalem. Partially rebuilt by Ezra. The walls were still unfinished and the work of restoration at a standstill.

IN THE PERSIAN PALACE

The Book of Nehemiah begins without an introduction. The Jews reckoned Ezra and Nehemiah as one book, and they do form one continuous story. The scene shifts from Jerusalem to Persia and from Persia to Jerusalem again. A transfer of world power had again taken place and instead of Babylon's being supreme, Persia was the world ruler. Under Cyrus the Great, Babylon had been destroyed as an empire and the Jews had been allowed to return to their own city. Ezra had undertaken the work of restoration and it had proceeded to some degree of success when suddenly it was halted and the work was left unfinished. In the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, certain pilgrims from Jerusalem came to Shushan, the winter palace of the Persian king. Among these was Hanani, a brother of Nehemiah. Nehemiah is called in the book which bears his name a cupbearer to the king. This was not a menial position, but a high position of trust and honor. He was a Jew, remaining in Persia, perhaps for some good reason, for he was an out-and-out loyalist, and bore the sorrows of his native country upon his heart. The message which these pilgrims from Jerusalem brought was disconcerting to Nehemiah. When he heard their words, he "sat down and wept, and mourned certain days; and . . . fasted and prayed before the God of heaven." The prayer of Nehemiah is one of the most beautiful in the Bible. It deserves close study.

THE ROYAL CUPBEARER

Prayer is not always immediately answered. Several months went by before God gave an answer of peace to Nehemiah. One day when it fell to Nehemiah's lot to present the wine goblet to the king, the king noticed he had a sad countenance. There must have been something human and kindly about the heart of the king who noticed the countenance of one who served him. "Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick?" he asked. "This is nothing else but sorrow of heart." Nehe-

miah responded, "Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?" The king told Nehemiah to ask of him what he desired. When Nehemiah asked that he be sent to restore the city of his fathers, the king, with the queen sitting by him, first inquired the length of the visit, and then gave Nehemiah liberty to proceed to Jerusalem. He gave him letters to the governors beyond the Euphrates, and power to make requisition upon the king's forests in order that the walls and gates of the city might be built.

THE ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM

It was not as a lonely pilgrim that Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem, but as a representative of the Persian monarch. He came with some degree of pomp, with servants and with authority, and presented himself to the governors of the city. We can imagine what a stir his coming would make and how the hearts of the people would beat with expectation as each would ask the other concerning the errand which had brought him thither. Nehemiah, however, was wise and shrewd. He kept his purpose to himself for he knew there were enemies without and within. So one night he took a few men with him and went out of the city and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down. When he had seen the situation and organized his plan in his own mind he announced his purpose to rebuild the walls, and immediately set about his work with a great deal of dispatch and assurance.

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NEHEMIAH INSPECTING THE WALLS BY NIGHT

ENEMIES FROM WITHOUT

There were many enemies with whom Ezra had had to contend, and Nehemiah found the same conditions. Samaria lay to the north. It had been peopled with Assyrians and they were jealous of Jerusalem's possible power and the return of her glory. The leader of the Samaritan people was Sanballat, and he had associated with himself a certain man by the name of Tobiah, and had gained the alliance of surrounding and opposing nations, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites. These men tried to lure Nehemiah from his work. Four times they attempted to get him to a conference, but each time he returned the answer, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"

Not only did he have enemies without, but he had to face enemies within. The rich were oppressing the poor, and the poor in order to live were mortgaging their fields and their vineyards and their houses, and were falling gradually into the hands of the profiteers who were making gain from the situation which had been created. Nehemiah was very angry. He called together people and priests and demanded that everyone should give himself ungrudgingly to the task, that all the usury should be stopped, and that the land which had been taken should be restored. Nehemiah's command was obeyed, and within fifty-two days the work was completed and the wall finished and the gates closed. He had overcome all opposition by his courage and his tremendous faith in God.

THE DEDICATION OF THE PEOPLE

When Nehemiah had finished the building of the wall and secured the city against attack he set himself to restore the worship of Jehovah. A great assembly was called. Ezra read and explained the book of the law. Immediately the people broke forth into confession and penitence. Nehemiah, however, bade them prepare to celebrate the feast, for it was a time not of sorrow but of joy. He said, "The joy of Jehovah is your strength."

The feast of tabernacles was revived and the people made booths of wild olive and myrtle and palm branches and dwelt in them as they had not done since the time of Joshua. The law of the Lord was read, and Ezra led the people in prayer. They made a covenant to walk in the way of the Lord. It was a sevenfold covenant. First, to abstain from marriage with heathen people. Sec-

ond, to keep the Sabbath and all holy days. Third, to observe the sabbatical year. Fourth, to pay the Temple tax. Fifth, to provide for Temple sacrifices. Sixth, to bring in the first fruits to the Temple. Seventh, to deliver all the tithes of the ground to the Levites. This covenant was subscribed to and the joy and happiness of the people were great. When Nehemiah had secured this great victory he returned to Persia in order to keep faith with the Persian king.

THE RETURN OF NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah after some delay returned again to Jerusalem. He found that during his absence things had not gone on as well as he had expected. There was a reaction from the revival experiences which had brought joy to his heart and the heart of the people. This is often the case. They had broken their covenant. They were buying and selling on the Sabbath, and were marrying with the people of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab, and their children were sometimes not able to speak the language of Jerusalem. Tobiah had been given a place in the Temple and the laws of the city had become lax. Nehemiah changed all this very quickly. He cast Tobiah and his belongings out of the Temple, the city gates were closed during the Sabbath, and the men who had married foreign wives were punished and their wives dismissed. The last words of the Book of Nehemiah are very suggestive. The book closes with a prayer. "Remember me, O my God, for good." It is interesting to remember that the Book begins with a beautiful prayer and ends with prayer. Nehemiah's whole life was a life of trust in God and he did his great work because he was a praying man and linked his weakness to the strength of Almighty God.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. In what country did Nehemiah live?
2. What request did he make of the king?
3. What opposition did he meet with in his work?
4. What difficulties did he have with the Jews?
5. What do you most admire about Nehemiah?
6. How did he discover the weakness of Jerusalem?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 33. What are the sacraments?

A. The sacraments are the two sacred observances which Christ gave to the Church, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Q. 34. What is baptism?

A. Baptism is the sacred use of water, as appointed by Jesus Christ, to signify God's cleansing us of our sins, our consecration to God, and our membership in the Church.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. During what period of history did Nehemiah live?
2. When his story begins what was his work?
3. Why did he wish to return to Jerusalem?
4. With what difficulties did he meet?
5. Who helped him make his work a success?
6. What reforms did he institute in Jerusalem?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 25. How doth Christ execute the office of a priest?

A. Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.

Lesson XII—ESTHER, THE PATRIOT QUEEN

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"—Esth. 4: 14.

TEXT OF LESSON, Esth. 4: 13 to 5: 3

For entire lesson, see The Book of Esther

AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

Ch. 4: 13 Then Mordecai bade them return answer unto Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14 For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then will relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place, but thou and thy father's house will perish: and who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

15 Then Esther bade them return answer unto Mordecai,

AUTHORIZED VERSION

Ch. 4: 13 Then Mor'de-cai commanded to answer Es'ther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14 For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, *then* shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?

15 ¶ Then Es'ther bade *them* return Mor'de-cai *this answer,*

16 Go, gather together all the Jews that are

16 Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast in like manner; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

17 So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

* * * * *

Ch. 5: 1 Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the entrance of the house.

2 And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favor in his sight; and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

3 Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be given thee even to the half of the kingdom.

present in Shu'shan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which *is* not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

17 So Mor'de-cai went his way, and did according to all that Es'ther had commanded him.

* * * * *

Ch. 5: 1 Now it came to pass on the third day, that Es'ther put on *her* royal *apparel*, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.

2 And it was so, when the king saw Es'ther the queen standing in the court, *that* she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Es'ther the golden sceptre that *was* in his hand. So Es'ther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

3 Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Es'ther? and what *is* thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom.

The Time—About 475 B.C. **The Place**—Persia.

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, June 11	Vashti Deposed	Esth. 1: 13-22.
Tuesday, June 12	Esther Chosen Queen	Esth. 2: 15-18.
Wednesday, June 13	Haman Plotting Against the Jews	Esth. 3: 8-13.
Thursday, June 14	Esther's Heroism	Esth. 4: 13 to 5: 3.
Friday, June 15	Mordecai Honored	Esth. 7: 4-11.
Saturday, June 16	Haman Hanged	Esth. 8: 1-10.
Sunday, June 17	Help in Jehovah	Psalm 124.

PERSONS AND PLACES

Esther. A Jewess, cousin of Mordecai; the Persian queen.

Mordecai. A man of power and influence at the Persian court.

Vashti. The deposed queen of the Persian king.

Haman. The secretary of state, so-called, of the Persian king, and enemy of the Jewish people.

Ahasuerus. The Persian king, called in secular history Xerxes.

Shushan. The winter palace of the Persian king.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER

The story of Esther is one of the great stories of the world. The tale shifts from scene to scene with startling surprises. There is a wonderful background of Persian life and customs. There is a dramatic movement in the story and some thrilling experiences. The characters that pass across the page are drawn in black and white. They are good and they are bad. We see for a moment the excessive luxury and at times debauchery of the Persian nobility and then again we behold the helplessness and servitude of the Jewish people. The book is read in connection with what is known as the feast of Purim, but for us it holds an altogether human and personal interest. It is interesting to know that the name of God is never mentioned in the book and many have wondered for that reason how it ever came to find its place among the books of the Bible. We see as we study the book that while it does not name God, yet his presence is ever to be discovered.

ESTHER THE QUEEN

The story opens with a Persian feast. Ahasuerus, better known in history as Xerxes, was king of Persia. He had made a great feast in order to display his riches, and at the same time Vashti, his queen, had made a feast for the women. The feast lasted for a week and by that time the king and all his guests were drunk and he had lost his sense of what was right and discreet. In the midst of the festivity he had demanded that the queen should be brought before the guests so they might admire her beauty. Perhaps Vashti herself with her women had also been drinking. At any rate she refused to submit to the indignity suggested by the king, and she was deposed as queen and dismissed from the court.

This serves as an introduction to Esther. On Vashti's dismissal there was a demand for a new queen and all the young women of the land were brought together at Shushan, the palace, so that

the king might choose another queen. His choice fell upon a Jewish maiden whose name was Hadassah, or as we know her, Esther. She was very young and exceedingly beautiful. She was an orphan, and had been brought up in the home of her cousin, Mordecai, who had trained her implicitly to obey and trust him. In this case he had commanded her to conceal her Jewish ancestry.

HAMAN THE CRUEL

Haman was the villain in this drama. Nine years passed after Esther had been crowned queen, and then Haman, who acted as a sort of secretary of state in the Persian capital, formed a plot to massacre the Jews. Many of the Jews had, of course, returned to Judah when Cyrus liberated them in Babylon, but many still remained in the country, scattered over all the empire. There were doubtless many who had no religious concern, or otherwise they would have returned to Judah with their brethren. They were tolerated, but still hated. Haman had been offended by the conduct of one of these Jews who had some prominence in and around the court. This man was Moredcai, Esther's cousin. When Haman rode in pomp through the city Mordecai refused to do homage to him, and Haman resented his conduct and planned not only his overthrow but the overthrow of all his people. The king allowed Haman almost supreme power, and so was easily persuaded by him to issue a law condemning all the Jews to be put out of the way. A copy of the writing was sent to all the provinces to be published to all the people throughout the kingdom.

ESTHER BEFORE THE KING

Mordecai was the first to face the coming tragedy. He put on sackcloth and ashes and cried with a bitter cry. Word of Mordecai's sorrow and grief reached Esther and when she sent to him to inquire the cause of his mourning, he told her of the decree and made known to her the only possible way of escape. His plan was that she herself should appear before the king and ask for the annulling of the decree. There was one very potent reason which made Esther hesitate to carry out her cousin's wish. There was a law that no one could come unto the king into the inner court who was not called.

Mordecai replied that Esther herself could not escape, for doubtless the secret of her ancestry had been made known to Haman. "Then Mordecai bade them return answer unto Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then will relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place, but thou and thy father's house will perish: and who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" These were strong, appealing, and patriotic words, and there was nothing for Esther to do but to give herself in sacrificial service for the attaining of the desired end. She ordered the Jews in Shushan to fast for three days, and she and her maids would also fast for that length of time. After the three days had passed she would go before the king.

ESTHER THE HEROINE

The day came when Esther was to appear before the king. She dressed herself in royal apparel and made herself as beautiful and attractive as she could. As soon as the king saw Esther like a vision of beauty standing in the court she immediately obtained favor in his sight and he held out to her the golden scepter. She drew near to him and touched the top of the scepter and the king said to her, knowing she had come to him for a purpose, "What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be given thee even to the half of the kingdom." Esther was shrewd and careful and knew that delay would help her cause and so she asked that the king and Haman should come to a banquet which she had prepared for them. There was wisdom in such a request. She asked something the king could readily grant. They came to the banquet, and when Esther was asked what she wished she requested that on the next day the king and Haman should come to another banquet which she had prepared. Haman went forth that day joyful and glad of heart. The only disappointment he met with was the fact that Mordecai neither moved for him nor bowed to him and in his wrath Haman erected a gallows fifty cubits high on which to hang Mordecai.

That night God was Esther's Helper. The king could not sleep, and in his sleeplessness he asked that the book of records be read to him, and there he heard how Mordecai once had saved the king's life. The king asked what honor had been bestowed upon Mordecai and it was found that nothing had been done for him. The following day the king asked Haman what should be done to the man the king delighted to honor. Thinking that the king meant himself Haman suggested that the man be clad in royal apparel with a crown on his head, and that he be placed on the king's horse, and led through the streets of the city with the proclamation, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor." Haman was overwhelmed with chagrin and humiliation when he was ordered to do that very thing for Mordecai the Jew.

At the banquet which followed Esther presented her request, saying, "If I have found favor in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request: for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish." The king in his anger said, "Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?" Esther pointed to Haman and the king rose up in his

wrath. Haman was led forth and hanged upon the same gallows which he had erected for Mordecai. Esther fell down at the king's feet, and weeping tears of sorrow and joy asked him to prevent the carrying out of the decree against her people. She prevailed with the king and messengers were sent forth into all the provinces giving the Jews liberty to protect themselves. The original decree could not be recalled, but this much the king could do.

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. Over what people was Esther made queen?
2. Why was Esther obedient to Mordecai?
3. What plot did Mordecai discover against the Jews?
4. How did he propose to hinder the plot?
5. What risk did Esther take in appearing before the king?
6. What quality do you like best in Esther?

The Intermediate Catechism

Q. 35. Why are the infant children of members of the Church dedicated to God in baptism?

A. The infant children of members of the Church are dedicated to God in baptism because his covenant made with believing parents includes their children.

Q. 36. What is expected of baptized children?

A. It is expected of baptized children that they will think of themselves as dedicated to God and, in early years, confess Jesus Christ and come to the Lord's Supper.

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. Where is the scene of the story of Esther?
2. How did Esther, a Jewess, become queen?
3. What queenly qualities did she possess?
4. What plot against her people did she thwart?
5. How did the test to which she was put help Esther herself?
6. Were all the standards of Esther truly Christian?

The Shorter Catechism

Q. 26. How doth Christ execute the office of a king?

A. Christ executeth the office of a king, in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.

Lesson XIII—REVIEW: GREAT MEN AND WOMEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE GOLDEN TEXT—"Let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." —Heb. 12 : 1.

DEVOTIONAL READING, Psalm 99

DAILY HOME READINGS

Date	Title	Reference
Monday, June 18	The Call of Abraham	Gen. 12: 1-5.
Tuesday, June 19	Joseph Forgiving His Brothers	Gen. 45: 3-11.
Wednesday, June 20	The Call of Moses	Ex. 3: 1-10.
Thursday, June 21	Ruth, the Faithful Daughter	Ruth 1: 14-22.
Friday, June 22	The Call of Isaiah	Isa. 6: 1-8.
Saturday, June 23	The Shepherd Psalm	Psalm 23.
Sunday, June 24	Jehovah, the King	Psalm 99.

The Bible is compared to a picture gallery. The portraits of men and women through long ages in the world's history are there to be seen. Each one is drawn by a master and represents some great quality in life and character. This quarter's study has introduced us to several of these great character portraits. Let us think of them as hanging in a gallery, and let us stand before them and see if we can read their message and meaning. We will leave the first lesson until the last.

(1) Abraham. His is the oldest picture in the gallery. It is four thousand years old. He is called in the Bible by two very interesting names. He was known as the "friend of God." This is a very remarkable name for a man to bear. It was given to him by God himself because of Abraham's faith and his obedience. He was as obedient as a little child and God was his constant companion. The other name by which he was called was the "father of the faithful." He was a man of faith. If you look at the portrait of his life you will discover that faith was his distinguishing quality. He has been called the first of the Pilgrim Fathers because he left his own land and went out seeking a land of which God had spoken to him, but of which he knew nothing. The great words written concerning him in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews should be known by every girl and boy. "For he looked for the city which

hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God.''

(2) JOSEPH. The second portrait in the gallery is that of a statesman. You will remember that he was called the prime minister of Egypt. He wore first a coat of many colors and afterwards a royal robe. He began as a dreamer and ended as a doer, and yet we remember him not so much for his policies and statesmanship as for his likable and lovable spirit.

(3) MOSES. Perhaps the greatest picture in the gallery is that of Moses. You will remember reading about how Michelangelo carved a great statue of Moses and how it is one of the greatest works of art in the world. If you look at his life very closely you will discover that he was a great leader like Lincoln and was used of God to lead the Children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage into liberty. He was also a great general, a general like Grant, and led the people of his country through the wilderness to victory. He was also a great lawgiver. The Ten Commandments were given to us through the hand of Moses. In the city of Pittsburgh on the side of the courthouse facing the street there is a bronze tablet containing these Ten Commandments, which are the fundamental laws of the land.

(4) RUTH. We come next upon the picture of a beautiful woman. Her picture is usually painted as a young girl gleaning grain in the harvest field. She is also painted as leaning upon the arm of Naomi, her mother-in-law. She also could be painted as a mother holding in her arms a little child who became the grandfather of King David. In her face we read the law of kindness and of friendship. Her great words to Naomi should be hidden away in everyone's memory.

(5) SAMUEL. The portrait of Samuel is that of a judge and prophet. He was also a kingmaker. He ruled over the land and was the last of the judges, and it was he who set the first king upon his throne. He not only chose Saul to be king, but he anointed David. The first law of Samuel was obedience. You remember in the Temple he said, ''Speak, Jehovah; for thy servant heareth.'' To Saul later in the days of his disobedience he spoke the same word of obedience. He said, ''To obey is better than sacrifice.''

(6) DAVID. It is very difficult for us to know what picture of David should be shown in the gallery. We might show him as a king with crown and scepter, ruling over Israel as a united people during the most glorious period in the history of the people of God. His picture might also be presented as a poet. Sometimes you see David represented with a harp in his hands. He was a great musician and the book of The Psalms owes much to him. He might also be pictured as a shepherd. In the days of his youth he was a shepherd and later in life he became a shepherd to his people. He even thought of God as a shepherd. It was he who wrote the familiar words, ''Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want.''

(7) ELIJAH. You have doubtless seen pictures of Elijah and he is always represented as a strong and courageous man. He was like John the Baptist. He came out of the wilderness a strange man, calling upon the people to repent and return to God. He called forth quick decisions on the part of the people. ''If Jehovah be God, follow him,'' he said. He did not wish people to try to serve both God and the world at the same time. To do so was like trying to walk east and west at the same time. He was a prophet who reformed the social and religious conditions of the people.

(8) ISAIAH. The character of Isaiah is difficult to portray. We know so little about him. We hear his voice, but we do not see his person. He came with one great prophecy of peace. He spoke of the coming of the Saviour whose ''name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.''

(9) JEREMIAH. Jeremiah has often been called the ''weeping prophet.'' This is a mistake. He did have sorrow of heart, but he never lost courage, and never betrayed his mission.

(10) NEHEMIAH. We picture Nehemiah as a great reformer. He gave up his position in the court in Persia in order to rebuild Jerusalem. It was his faith in God which made him a success.

(11) ESTHER. The story of Esther was told in our last lesson. She was a great and true patriot. With all her sweetness and winsomeness and charm she was courageous and loyal to her duty. When she had determined what her duty was she went ahead regardless of the consequences.

(12) JESUS. The Easter lesson, the first lesson of the quarter, told us the story of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Let us close our studies in the picture gallery by looking last on the portrait of Jesus. None of the other characters which we have studied was perfect. Jesus alone is spotless. His word to us is, ''Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.''

FOR INTERMEDIATE PUPILS

1. What characters have we studied in the lessons of this quarter?
2. About what time did each live?
3. Name the places where they lived and worked.
4. For what is David most remembered?
5. What is peculiar about the Book of Esther?
6. What character do you like best?

FOR SENIOR STUDENTS

1. By what name is Abraham called?
2. What was the great work of Moses?
3. What is a prophet? What prophets have we studied?
4. Why is the story of Ruth in the Bible?
5. To what period of history do Nehemiah and Esther belong?
6. What is the value of studying these Old Testament characters?

ORDERS OF SERVICE FOR SECOND QUARTER, 1923[1]

SERVICE, No. 1

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 110. "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!"

A PRAYER OF CONFESSION. (All uniting.)

Almighty and most merciful Father; We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent; According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake; That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy name. Amen.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 99. "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling."

THE SHEPHERD PSALM. (Psalm 23.)

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 252. "He Leadeth Me! O Blessed Thought."

THE MISSIONARY STORY. By Senior Student or Pastor.

THE MISSIONARY PRAYER.

THE MISSIONARY HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 140. "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations."

THE OFFERING AND RECORDS.

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 59. "There Is a Green Hill Far Away."

THE LESSON PERIOD.

PIANO. (Softly.) "Alleluia," No. 103. "Break Thou the Bread of Life."

ORCHESTRA OR QUARTET.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 119. "Onward, Christian Soldiers."

BENEDICTION.

SERVICE, No. 2

PIANO OR ORCHESTRA. "Alleluia," No. 51. "The King of Love My Shepherd Is."

DOORS CLOSED.

RESPONSIVE READING.

Supt.—I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go unto the house of Jehovah.
School.—Our feet are standing
Within thy gates, O Jerusalem.
Supt.—Jerusalem, that art builded
As a city that is compact together.
School.—Whither the tribes go up, even the tribes of Jehovah.
Supt.—For an ordinance for Israel,
To give thanks unto the name of Jehovah.
School.—For there are set thrones for judgment.
Supt.—The thrones of the house of David.
School.—Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.
Supt.—They shall prosper that love thee.
School.—Peace be within thy walls.
Supt.—And prosperity within thy palaces.
School.—For my brethren and companions' sakes,
I will now say, Peace be within thee.
Teachers.—For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God.
All.—I will seek thy good.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 109. "Come, Thou Almighty King."

PRAYER.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

OUR CHURCH AT WORK IN AMERICA. Home Mission Facts by the Pastor.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 189. "I've Found a Friend; Oh, Such a Friend."

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON.

ORCHESTRA OR QUARTET.

OFFERING AND RECORDS.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 157. "My Faith Looks Up to Thee."

THE LESSON PERIOD.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REMARKS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

HYMN.—"Alleluia," No. 116. "Blest Be the Tie that Binds."

THE MIZPAH BENEDICTION.

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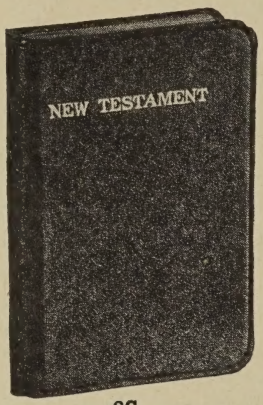

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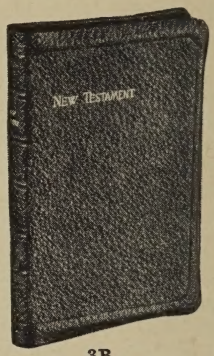

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